EDUCATION
AND POVERTY REDUCTION
STRATEGIES

ISSUES OF POLICY COHERENCE

COLLOQUIUM PROCEEDINGS

HSRC
PRESS

Edited by Simeon Maile

Contents

Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AsgiSA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa
Abet	adult basic education and training
ANC	African National Congress
ACCC	Association of Canadian Community Colleges
BB-BEE	broad-based black economic empowerment
BEE	black economic empowerment
BNG	Breaking New Ground
CBO	community based organisation
CoP	communities of practice
Cosatu	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CSI	corporate social investment
CSR	corporate social responsibility
DET	Depart of Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DoF	Department of Finance
DoH	Department of Health
DoL	Department of Labour
DoSD	Department of Social Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
EBP	evidence-based practice
EBM	evidence-based medicine
ECCE	early childhood care and education
ECD	early childhood development
ECT	Eastern Cape Technikon
EFA	Education for All
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FAWE	Forum for African Women Education (in Zanzibar)
FET	further education and training
FTC	full technical education
FTE	full-time equivalent

FSDoE	Free State Department of Education
GDP	gross domestic product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy
GER	general enrolment ratio
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
Gripp	getting research into policy and practice
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
Hemis	Higher Education Management Information Systems
HET	Higher Education and Training
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICT	information and communication technology
Idasa	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ILO	International Labour Organization
INP	Integrated Nutrition Programme
IT	information technology
Jipsa	Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition
LE	life expectancy
LSM	living standard measure
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEC	Member of the Executive Committee
MTEF	medium-term expenditure framework
MP	Member of Parliament
NBI	National Business Initiative
Nedlac	National Development and Labour Council
Nepad	New Partnership for African Development
NEPI	National Education Policy Initiative
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NC	Niagara College
NPHE	National Plan for Higher Education
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy

NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NSSF	Norms and Standards for School Funding
NWICO	New World Information and Communication Order
NZEP	New Zanzibar Education Policy
OBE	outcomes-based education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Pace	Project for the Advancement of Community Education
PCAS	Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services
PCI	per capita income
PED	Provincial Education Department
PGA	poverty gap analysis
PHI	poverty headcount index
PRS	poverty reduction strategy
PSA	public service announcement
PSNP	Primary School Nutrition Programme
QIDS	Quality Improvement and Development Strategy
RCT	Randomised Controlled Trial
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
ROI	return on investment
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corperation
Sacmeq	South African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SADF	South African Defence Force
Saqa	South African Qualifications Authority
Sasa	South African Schools Act
SBST	site-based support team
SC	Senior Certificate
Seta	Sector Education and Training Authority
SGB	school governing body
SMME	small, medium and micro enterprises
SNP	School Nutrition Programme
SSD	Sustainable Skills Development
SSS	social assistance support
SUZA	State University of Zanzibar
TB	Tuberculosis
TBVC	Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei

TEA	Tanzania Education Authority
Timms	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
Unesco	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
Unisa	University of South Africa
US	United States of America
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
WHO	World Health Organization
WSU	Walter Sisulu University
ZEMAP	Zanzibar Education Master Plan
ZEP	Zanzibar Education Policy
ZGRPS	Zanzibar Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy

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Introduction

Simeon Maile

It is generally believed among researchers and development practitioners that education leads to accelerated human development, poverty reduction and sustained economic growth. This assertion comes as result of thorough investigation for strategies to reduce poverty. It gained momentum in 2000 when world leaders agreed on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Governments in developing and developed countries jointly committed themselves to provide resources and policies to implement the MDGs. African leaders adopted MDGs as a tool within their wider development planning framework in order to end the tragic conditions which affect and deprive many Africans of their basic human rights. By making MDGs tools for co-ordinating development policy, African leaders tackle extreme poverty and create environments for economic development and growth. For Africa, MDGs provide a new impetus to reverse the deterioration in human development (Economic Commission for Africa 2005).

Anchored within national development strategies in many African countries, the MDGs also provide a vehicle for broad-based, community participation in development, including decision-making at a grassroots level. Above all, they have provided the basis for global partnership on a broader scale than can be achieved in solo efforts. The New Partnership for African Development (Nepad) is a case in point here. It incorporated the MDGs into its framework. Embodied in the Nepad action plan and implementation strategies (Nepad 2007), are collaborative development activities aimed at:

- Supporting country-led initiatives to identify and align technical and investment intervention in areas/aspects expected to provide optimal returns in terms of set productivity, livelihoods and environmental resilience targets.
- Facilitating peer learning and review, including support to strategic thinking and analysis. This also directly supports the entrenchment of the values of transparency, accountability and shared commitment to the growth agenda.

- Facilitating greater in-country alignment and harmonisation of development efforts and support to mutual engagement in the regional development agenda.
- Streamlining and supporting institutional and technical capacity building at both country and regional level, including policy orientation supportive of sustainable implementation capacities of the continent's development agenda.

The action plan and strategies recognise the fact that problems of development faced by Africa cannot be solved by an individual country. There is a need for concerted and coherent efforts. Each country is required to play a role, particularly in eradicating poverty and hunger, and achieving universal primary education. The Economic Commission for Africa (2005) argues that although Africa has the potential to achieve the MDGs, it has not succeeded thus far. In fact, the number of poor people on the continent has risen since the 1990s. The spectre of hunger continues to haunt most African countries. There are, however, some African countries who have managed to improve their chances of achieving the MDGs. South Africa is one such country. The success can be attributed to a number of factors, including programmatic commitment to education and poverty reduction.

Education has been identified as a primary MDG and South Africa is making good progress in this arena. Authors of the chapters in this book that focus on MDGs one and two reveal mixed feelings about South Africa's progress towards achieving the MDGs. Some chapters argue that in the area of education South Africa has improved in net enrolment of learners in primary school and income poverty. Hence, the claim that poverty has been reduced and that, as a result in improvements made in education, health and nutrition have also improved. In addition, it has been argued that girl children have also been empowered. Improvement in education has spin-offs for better reproductive health, lower child mortality rates and improved welfare through better nutrition and higher immunisation rates. Education may be the single most effective preventative weapon against HIV/AIDS.

Education, it is argued, increases productivity and earnings. Research has established that, worldwide, every year of schooling translates into increased individual income of about 10%. In poor countries, the gains are even greater.

Researchers also claim that education reduces inequality as the great 'leveller' against illiteracy (which is one of the strongest predictors of poverty). Primary education plays a catalytic role for those most likely to be poor, including girls, ethnic minorities, orphans, disabled people and rural families. By enabling larger numbers to share in the growth process, education can be the powerful tide that lifts all boats.

On the other hand, researchers argue that eradication of poverty is not achievable through education alone, and they also argue that the MDGs are far from being the only solution to the development challenges faced by many countries in Africa. For this reason, some scholars argue that education alone does not necessarily solve development problems – poverty, in particular. They point out that it persists in states rolling out education for all. Leaders who have committed themselves to meeting the MDGs with better educated children, equal opportunities for women and a healthier environment, have not eradicated poverty in spite of their vision for a world without poverty, hunger and disease. In many countries who record high scores on net enrolment in primary and secondary education, poverty remains a challenge. Nepad (2001) argues that to achieve the MDGs, African leaders need to take joint responsibility for the following:

- Strengthening mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution at the sub-regional and continental levels, and to ensure that these mechanisms are used to restore and maintain peace.
- Promoting and protecting democracy and human rights in their respective countries and regions by developing clear standards of accountability, transparency and participatory governance at the national and sub-national levels.
- Restoring and maintaining macroeconomic stability, especially by developing appropriate standards and targets for fiscal and monetary policies, and introducing appropriate institutional frameworks to achieve these standards.
- Instituting transparent legal and regulatory frameworks for financial markets and the auditing of private companies and the public sector.
- Revitalising and extending the provision of education, technical training and health services, with high priority given to addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other communicable diseases.
- Promoting the role of women in social and economic development by reinforcing their capacity in the domains of education and training; by

developing revenue generating activities through facilitating access to credit; and by assuring their participation in the political and economic life of African countries.

These objectives raise an important reality: the reduction of poverty is complex and needs to be approached from multiple perspectives. Yes, education can help to reduce poverty, but countries need a holistic approach to take this further. The lack of consensus among development practitioners, policy-makers and researchers may even be exacerbating the impact of poverty.

The Education and Poverty Reduction Strategies: Issue of Policy Coherence Colloquium, held in Centurion from 21 to 23 February 2007, set out to build on recent national and international conferences on poverty reduction strategies. The main argument emerging from the discussions was that human deprivations can be radically reduced, but to harness and benefit from educational endeavours requires a coherent and concerted effort. As policy-makers, development practitioners and researchers become aware of the limitations of narrow approaches to poverty reduction, they are beginning to focus the planning and management of policy on the important issues of co-ordination and coherence.

The purpose of the colloquium was to answer the following questions:
- What impact has there been in recent years on education levels and outcomes in the general population and in specific demographic groupings?
- Where are the key gaps and areas that need strengthening in terms of the impact of education in poverty reduction?
- Which specific areas require coherence?

Structure of the book

The chapters presented in the Colloquium answer these questions from different perspectives and are arranged logically according to themes. The purpose of Section 1: Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks is to address focus, assumptions, major concepts, contributing scholars and methodologies incompatible with research on the relationship between education and poverty reduction. It is important to look at education and poverty reduction strategies as a set of organised and systematic statements related to development that are communicated in a meaningful whole through specific programmes. For

the purpose of the Colloquium the frameworks represent a general domain, individualisable group of statements. Generally the chapters in this section combine with each other in a predictable way and have some coherence. As is the case among researchers working on issues of economic development and poverty in developing countries, there is a substantial mixed-discourse approach among researchers evaluating the effects of welfare reform and related policies and programmes (London et al. 2007; Place et al. 2007). However, because of the complexity of practices prevailing in education and poverty reduction, some related discourses are dealt with in other sections of this book.

Chapters in Section 1 help us understand why a particular understanding of education and poverty reduction problems at some point gain dominance and are seen as authoritative while other understandings are discredited (Ruddat 2005). Simeon Maile's chapter deals with basic principles of and current discourses on policy coherence. The arguments raised include analysis of meanings, major concepts and dominant theories. He also gives an assessment of the relevant practices prevailing in South Africa. Maile's chapter is complemented by Jonathan Carter's chapter, which reviews educational outcomes in South Africa since the fall of apartheid. The first part of the chapter reviews some of the salient features of the period after apartheid; it then reviews research performed on data obtained from assessments of numeracy and literacy competencies on Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (Sacmeq) countries and other research performed on education in South Africa. Using the above reviews and data, it provides a discussion on possible recommendations for policy coherence and more effective policy implementation in South Africa. Maile's chapter on getting research on education and poverty into policy and practice suggests practical ways in which researchers can influence policy. This chapter is important for researchers who aspire to make an impact in the policy arena. It analyses the challenges that researchers and policy-makers encounter in meeting each other, and also points out potential entry points for successful influence.

In the same vein, Yusuf Sayed's chapter critically examines the link between provision of education for all and the goal of poverty reduction and eradication in current education policy thinking. It outlines the reasons why education is understood to be key to poverty reduction and elimination and the evidence

on which this is based. It further explores some key policy options and strategies for ensuring that education does indeed provide the poor with the means to overcome the conditions of poverty in which they find themselves. It concludes by highlighting key challenges that governments face in ensuring that education is a powerful tool of poverty reduction and elimination and social transformation. Joe Teffo's chapter makes strong statements and tries to argue its case from the perspective of the poor. It argues for a liberatory education that is undergirded by an African philosophy of education that would assist the continent in its quest for self-reliance and a flourishing future. The positions taken and arguments advanced are not necessarily new and may be found in the current development literature. In addition, the recommended strategies and solutions are not comprehensive and may just be one side of the coin. Other positions and arguments may be just as valid. Above all, the views expressed are of an African philosopher and not an economist.

Section 2 deals with poverty in the education system. Moeketsi Letseka and Mignonne Breier argue that out of every 100 students who enter South Africa's higher education system each year, about 30% are likely to have dropped out by the end of their first year, and about 50% by the end of their third year. Four years after entering, less than a quarter will have graduated.

The common perception has been that these students mainly leave for academic reasons because they have been ill-prepared for higher education study by the schools they attended and do not gain the support at university to bridge the gap. Increasingly, however, it is being recognised that these students are just as likely to have left because they are too poor to stay. If they manage to afford the fees to get them beyond registration and into the system, they might soon find that their bursaries, loans or other income sources are insufficient to cover full living expenses; let alone support their dependants back home. They are often forced to leave to find employment.

The new funding formula for higher education favours those institutions that are able to produce graduates as quickly and efficiently as possible. Admitting students who might have financial and academic difficulties can have multiple disadvantages for the institutions concerned. Maximum teaching effort is required to help these students through their degrees, leaving academic staff with little time to research and publish. This means that the institutions do not benefit from the extra funds which are provided for research outputs. The impact of the special 'institutional factor' grants which the new funding

formula provides for institutions with high proportions of African and coloured students and of the additional support for foundation programmes remains to be seen.

The plight of the poor student is compounded by a number of other factors:
- Public higher education in South Africa is under-funded by international standards.
- Higher education institutions have been increasing their fees to compensate for the decrease in public funding in real terms.
- Academics are becoming increasingly involved in entrepreneurial activities to supplement their own incomes and balance their institutions' books.
- Institutions that previously prided themselves on the fact that their doors were open to the poor and disadvantaged are now prioritising students who are likely to boost their throughput rates.

All these factors have the potential to skew the student populations in favour of middle-class students who are white, Indian or coloured and who, for well known historical reasons and in that order, are more likely to meet the academic and financial criteria to stay the course of a degree than black African students. The trend has serious social and economic implications and could serve to reinforce the class and race divisions entrenched under apartheid, rather than break them down, as all education policy since 1994 has intended.

Zama Kiti's chapter presents a general overview of the School Nutrition Program (SNP) in South Africa. It seeks to sow optimism for those societies in despair and it is about evaluating the SNPs in South Africa, where evaluation is defined as careful retrospective assessment of the merit, worth and value of administration, output and outcome of government interventions intended to play a role in future practical situations. Above all, it seeks to provide additional scientific evidence on the impact of the school feeding programmes in developing countries that transcend the realms of the objective of the improvement of the child cognitive development that SNPs are traditionally designed for. Evidence informs us that whilst the SNP does indeed improve the intellectual capacity of a child, in developing countries it also serves as a form of food security. It posits an assertion that supports the adoption and implementation of the SNP as a long-term sustainable food security programme in poverty-stricken communities. Three schools in KwaZulu-Natal in different socio-economical contexts were studied. To correlate and

validate the information, two more schools outside the area and district were also studied. The study comprised of key-informant interviews, where parties responsible for the provision of food at schools and the educators were interviewed for the purpose of understanding the objective nuanced impacts of SNPs in South Africa.

Section 3 provides a critical reflection on education and poverty policies. Graeme Bloch argues that education in South Africa neither meets the skills needs of a growing society and economy nor provides equitable opportunities for poor and black learners. What are the historical and social factors that impact on the poor outcomes of the education system, and why is education change so difficult to achieve? Bloch's chapter examines the links between education and social development and makes some proposals about systems change in the transition to democracy in South Africa. The chapter ends with proposals for priorities towards ensuring education improvement and equity going forward.

Ursula Hoadley's chapter interrogates a growing vision of schools as sites of care and support for vulnerable children, especially in the context of HIV/AIDS. The chapter is based on two research activities: a desk review of projects working in the area of schools in the context of HIV/AIDS and poverty, and the documentation of a particular project in the Free State. The chapter also considers the South African policy framework for schools and vulnerable children. It begins by sketching out some of the major education policies pertaining to vulnerable children, especially in the context of HIV and AIDS. It then offers three cautionary notes in relation to the thrust of these policies, and those programmes attempting to implement them. The first is a consideration of the context of implementation – the schooling system, the second is the resourcing of these policies, and the third considers policy visions of schools and teacher. How schools and teachers are conceptualised both in policies and programmes is problematised. The misalignment between the policies around schools and vulnerable children, the resourcing of these policies and their contexts of implementation is brought into relief, as well as the implications for thinking about expanded roles for schools and teachers.

Hoadley's chapter is followed by Simeon Maile's on development policy options. Maile begins his argument with the analysis of current definitions of poverty and concludes that attempting to define poverty is a daunting task. He argues that those who attempt to define poverty face immense challenges because of

multiple deprivations and political interests prevailing in the discourse. The second part of his chapter deals with analysis of macroeconomic policies. He integrates development theories with policy analysis approaches. It breaks new ground in policy analysis in education by applying educational perspectives on macroeconomic policy. The third section of his chapter analyses policy options intended to address poverty in education.

In the same vein, Reynold Sonn argues that in South Africa, as in most post-colonial societies, poverty has had to do with a history of power relationships which have disadvantaged particular groups in society. Urban industries that have benefited from modern technological developments no longer need the large hordes of workers that used to service them. Hence the high rates of unemployment and poverty. The author argues that these are unanticipated consequences of good intentions – disservices of modern developments. For most, formal and institutionalised education is the trump card in the war against poverty and unemployment. Education has however failed the poor.

There is no doubt that much has changed in the educational field over the past decade, but the backlog with regard to appropriate school buildings, qualified teachers, suitable trained administrators and school facilities in general is so enormous that it would take years before the great majority of our schools function adequately educationally. In spite of impressive attempts to bring electricity and running water to the poor; to alleviate the housing crisis; to create employment opportunities for the destitute; to overhaul a discriminatory education system which has played havoc with the lives of the majority of young South Africans over decades; and transform healthcare, the living conditions of the poor and unemployed, of whom the majority is black, remain desperate. Sonn suggests some strategies for addressing the problems of poverty and unemployment, inter alia, sustainable skills development projects and partnerships; the new role of FET colleges; and huge state projects focusing on housing, health, roads, classrooms – built by the people for the people in compulsory national service programmes. These are programmes which would not only help to create and maintain the necessary physical infrastructure in South Africa, but would also help to put bread on the table of the hungry and ensure a roof over the heads of the homeless. If compulsory for all South Africans, young and old, and irrespective of race and class, it could, in addition, restore the dignity of the poor and aid the process of forging one nation in this country.

Section 4 deals with lessons and case studies derived from the local context and the international sphere. The purpose of this section was to learn best practices in South Africa and world at large. Salim Akoojee and Simon McGrath started the debate by arguing that skills development is considered indispensable to poverty reduction. Without skills to sell, the likelihood of getting out of a poverty trap is considerably reduced. They point out that the Minister of Education has, on various occasions, reiterated that colleges are to be considered robust, effective and relevant to serve the needs of the country. They assert that these are not to be 'second-chance' opportunities for post-school learners unable to access higher education. Various initiatives have been proposed to ensure that they deliver on this. Indeed, the importance of colleges in the overall national development context to improve the skills base has been reinforced by legislation, an injection of capital for improving college infrastructure and, currently, re-curricularisation. But is this enough to deliver on their national poverty reduction imperative and just what will it take for colleges to take their rightful place in the education and training system?

Delia Nzekwu also argues that more than 12 years after the new political dispensation South Africa's education system still faces enormous challenges. She contends that education is yet to meet the skills need for economic growth and development, and, in terms of being a catalyst for the alleviation of poverty through a genuine empowerment of the formerly disadvantaged black populace, change is very slow in coming. Public/private partnerships are not producing great results, yet huge resources are being ploughed into the education system. She concludes that South Africa is not short of educational policies and the private sector seems to be doing its best. However, the following questions remain: Where is it going wrong and what must be done?

In the absence of local answers we looked for international practices. Issa Ziddy from Zanzibar points out that Zanzibar currently faces many similar challenges, including poverty that hinders its development. The Zanzibar government has taken different deliberate measures to rise to these challenges covering the broad spectrum of economic, social and political areas. Ziddy points out that his country has developed strategies and policies in fighting poverty. Vision 2020 is an example of a strategy which has set out a long-term development agenda. The Zanzibar Poverty Reduction Plan is another strategy that has translated the Vision into short- to medium-term programmes.

The Zanzibar Education Policy directs education activities towards self-reliance and poverty reduction. This chapter reviews the implementation of the policies related to the female education policy as a means of poverty reduction and observes its impact on different educational levels and its outcome to Zanzibar society.

Another lesson from outside of South Africa is provided by Jane Stadler. Stadler's research indicates that policy might more productively establish guidelines for best practice, informing the development of and access to media technologies, media literacy and media content in the education sector and in the wider community. She argues that the specific area that requires coherence in terms of the media's role in and impact on education and development involves fostering a culture in which the different stakeholders – educators and academic researchers, media practitioners, policy-makers, corporate citizens and members of the public – work together towards mutual goals. She concludes that it is the role of policy to guide and co-ordinate this process, and to clarify the goals we strive to attain.

Section 5 includes personal narratives from people who experienced problems with poverty. Their stories give a symbolic meaning to challenges of education and poverty and reflect the reality of having to deal with poverty on a daily basis. Despite the challenges, the presenters were able to overcome poverty. This section is given the title 'Biographies of hope' because the presenters where once trapped in poverty but with support from the community they gained pathways out of poverty and are now managers of development programmes and projects in different forms. The stories of Stanley Ngobeni and Junius Malema represent the tenacity of the human spirit in overcoming life's challenges. They illustrate that in the midst of trepidations human spirit triumphs.

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SECTION 1:
Conceptual and theoretical frameworks
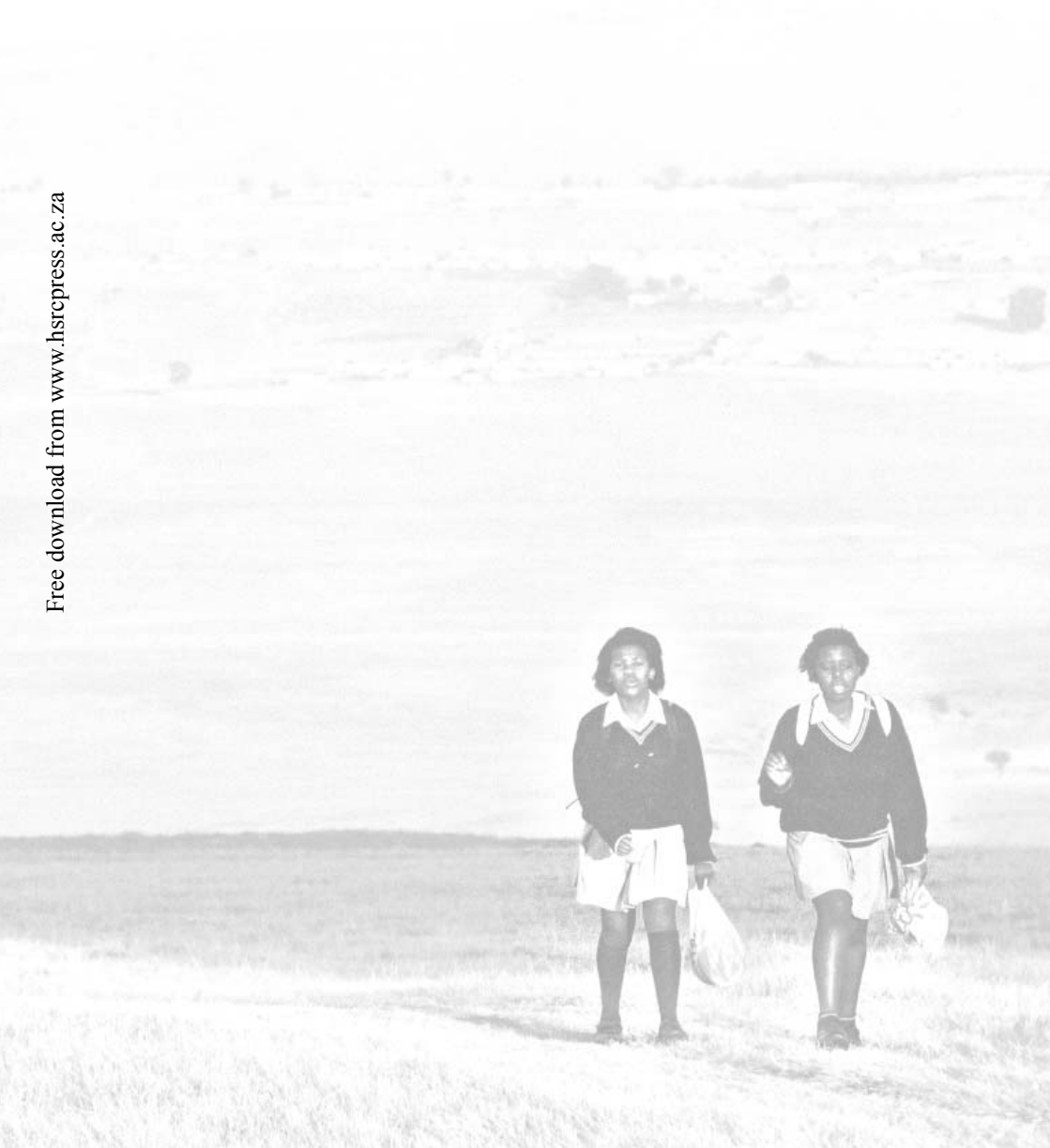
1 Policy coherence: Meanings, concepts and frameworks

Simeon Maile

South African policy development and related processes were heavily influenced by apartheid prior to 1994. Apartheid involved a variety of interventions and commitments aimed at the segregation of society, the most significant of which was the allocation of public resources according to racial status. Public services in health, education, social development and economic programmes were biased in favour of whites. This policy trajectory resulted in major distortions in these services and deficient, discriminatory policies contributed to the failure to provide basic services. Donaldson (1992) argues that the provision of services to the public was further stunted by political nepotism, which was facilitated by covert initiatives like the *broederbond* to preserve a white privilege.

In 2008 the new policy framework is guided by the need for transformation and major steps are being taken to address inequalities in health, education, welfare and the economy. This requires a fundamental shift in policy development and implementation. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996) provides us with guidelines for a more appropriate role of government in transforming South African society from one governed by discriminatory policies to a more democratic environment (RSA 1996). The preamble to the Constitution states that the purpose of transformation is to:

- Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamentals human rights.
- Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law.
- Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person.
- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

These provisions have far-reaching organisational and structural implications for redressing imbalances in the provision of public resources. Furthermore, it is stated in the founding provisions of the Constitution that transformation will be guided by the following values:

- Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms.
- Non-racialism and non-sexism.
- Supremacy of the Constitution and rule of law.
- Universal adult suffrage, a national common voters roll, regular elections and multiparty system of democratic government, to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness.

These values inform the vision and direction of the new policy framework. They have specific implications for planning and the effective management of public services, and recognise the role of different structures and levels of governance. Policy coherence will be measured by the integration of democratic values with transformation priorities such as achieving equitable access to social services and improving quality provision. South Africa's new democratic dispensation recognises the importance of mediation of authority in governance systems. It aims to devolve decision making around service delivery from the national ministry to the local level, allowing local authorities more control. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse meanings, concepts and possible frameworks.

Problematising policy coherence

There is a danger that transformation measures in South Africa could depart from the democratic principles espoused in the preamble and founding provisions of the Constitution. The challenge is therefore to sustain coherence and the overall balance of policies with democratic principles. This partly defines the role of government in setting rules for the provision of public services, both in the sense of defining freedoms and also in imposing constraints in the way services are provided. It also addresses the need to analyse interactions between private interests and state actions so that socio-economic co-ordination takes into consideration how private behaviour responds to changes in the public sector. This question enjoins us to scrutinise bureaucrats and politicians who may use the apparatus of government to

further personal interests. Social policy is about the incentives and constraints which surround private sector activities in different sectors of the public service.

Rationale

Research reveals that theorising about policy coherence is not a straightforward task. Hofmeyer and McLennan (1992) argue that attempts to unravel policy coherence should begin with facts about distribution. A good starting point is therefore the interrogation of the quantitative and qualitative problems of policy implementation in the past; as well as an analysis of residual challenges emanating from past policy practice. The crisis of policy incoherence stems from historical and ideological neglect of democratic principles.

Donalson (1992) argues that maintaining coherence and balance is problematic when policy attempts to address equity within a specific social sector. Social-service initiatives to address racial inequity by opening access to groups who have previously been disadvantaged is often a source of tension – a situation aggravated by a reduction in state subsidisation of 'white' services.

Manganyi (2004: 6) argues that the tension is worsened by what he calls 'drama in the middle'. Manganyi defines this phenomenon as the space between the beginning of transition and the desired end – represented by the expectations of the people. On the one hand, this can be illustrated by the black majority perceiving itself as a privileged group that should be at the centre of the government's policy concerns and programmes. On the other, racial and ethnic minorities consider themselves objects of systematic marginalisation by the government and its agencies. The challenge is to manage expectations of the people during transition. In South Africa, one of the greatest long-term challenges is how to come to terms with the expectations of the majority within realistic time-lines without further marginalisation of minorities.

At the time of writing, the majority would argue that they are not benefiting from public service programmes in the way they would have liked (Robinson 1998; Schlemmer 1994). Przeworski (1991) argues that in a context where power holders retain much of their control over the levers of power in society (property, military and bureaucracy) transition becomes a fragile process and incoherence in policy becomes a problem. This paper will interrogate

the disjuncture between government intentions represented by public service programmes and the expectations of the majority.

Conceptual framework

Meaning

Policy coherence focuses on the relationship and continuity between policies (De Coning & Cloete 2006). Coherence is broad in scope and includes the following:

- Inter-governmental relations.
- The relationship between a political system and a policy-making system.
- The resonance between organisations' values and the policy-making processes.
- Appropriate links between organisational structures.
- Processes and methods of policy-making.
- Consistency of decision-making with policy guidelines.
- Political leadership and commitment.
- Strategic-policy framework's consistency with government's goals and priorities.
- Horizontal consistency among policies.
- Reconciliation between policy priorities and budgeting imperatives.
- The provision of room for adjustment.
- Awareness of cross-cutting problems and issues.

A report by the House of Commons International Development Committee (2004) on policy coherence argues that the world does not come neatly packaged into issue areas, ripe for policy intervention. Policies designed to address one issue are bound to have an impact in other areas and policy coherence is fundamentally concerned with assessing this impact. Policy coherence is achieved when policies across a range of issues support the attainment of government goals. It is, firstly, concerned with doing no harm – ensuring that progress towards the achievement of government goals is not undermined by policies which relate primarily to other goals; and, secondly, it is about searching for potential scenarios and win-win situations where policies can aid the progress of government goals whilst also securing other

objectives. Put simply, policy coherence is about ensuring that time and effort is not wasted by actions in one sphere, undermining actions in another.

The OECD (2004) identifies four types of policy coherence. Type one is concerned with internal consistency of policies. Type two is the coherence of all government policies. Type three is the coherence and co-ordination between agencies within a government (often referred to as harmonisation). Type four is about ensuring the alignment of government's policies with those of outside government. Without policy coherence, policies may pull in different directions when governments try to balance competing interests. This results in wasteful duplication and dissonance, and is a hindrance in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted at the United Nations as part of the Millennium Declaration in 2000. The MDGs are to:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- Achieve universal primary education.
- Promote gender equality and empower women.
- Reduce child mortality.
- Improve maternal health.
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
- Ensure environmental sustainability.
- Develop a global partnership for development.

Policy coherence is clearly related to alignment and harmonisation. OECD (2004) points out that alignment describes the relationship between the priorities and systems of government and those of an outside agency. Alignment is closely linked to ideas around increasing the level of ownership of policies and systems of a government. Harmonisation refers to the extent of coherence in approaches, policies and systems. Alignment and harmonisation are indicators of policy coherence in that they refer to the extent of consistency in the approach to policies and systems within and across governments.

There are both obstacles and aids to harmonisation and alignment of policy. The most obvious obstacle is the perceived absence of policies around which outside agencies can align with a government. This arises because a government authority may not provide the policy framework when dealing with an outside agency. A lack of policy can also slow the delivery of services. In some cases, over-regulation or multiple policy frameworks may also be an obstacle and a lack of political commitment hampers harmonisation and alignment. Willingness is often seen as an aid to harmonisation and is,

in some respects, seen to be more important than capacity because it is an indicator of government's openness to alternatives and provides an entry point for dialogue.

There are also specific obstacles to systems alignment. Systems alignment implies compatability with national systems, and working with or through these systems as opposed to around them or in conflict with them. In the absence of a policy framework to align with, there is very little consideration of systems alignment issues. A further perceived obstacle to systems alignment is the extreme weakness or lack of key administrative systems. Budgeting may also differ according to different levels of governance and fragmentation in the policy process is a further obstacle.

Steps towards policy coherence

There are five steps to policy coherence, as adapted from OECD (2007):
- Step one is the initial recognition of interdependence between issues and the objectives and policies relating to those issues.
- Step two is the development of an understanding of the nature and strength of the relationship between issues.
- Step three is the specification of how policies impact upon one's government in practice and to what extent one's government impacts on another government with similar development characteristics.
- Step four is the assessment of scope for enhancing policy coherence by balancing or harmonising competing or complementary interests. In some circumstances it may be easy to enhance policy coherence – particularly in win-win situations where policy change can produce both domestic and international benefits. In others, where there are competing priorities, rather than simply poorly designed policies, it may be hard to enhance policy coherence.
- Step five is the modification of the objectives or policies designed to achieve government's strategic goals in order to ensure that they take likely impacts into account and are as coherent as possible.

Figure 1.1 shows the flow of steps to policy coherence. The importance of policy coherence has long been recognised in development and other spheres. What has been lacking in the developing word is effective mechanisms to enable government to move towards it. Policy coherence needs monitoring

Figure 1.1: The five steps to policy coherence for development

1. Recognition
of the interdependence and importance of policy coherence

↓

2. Understanding
the nature and strength of the relationship between issues

↓

3. Specifying
impact of the developed world's policies on developing countries

↓

4. Assessing
scope for enhancing policy coherence

↓

5. Modifying
objectives and policies
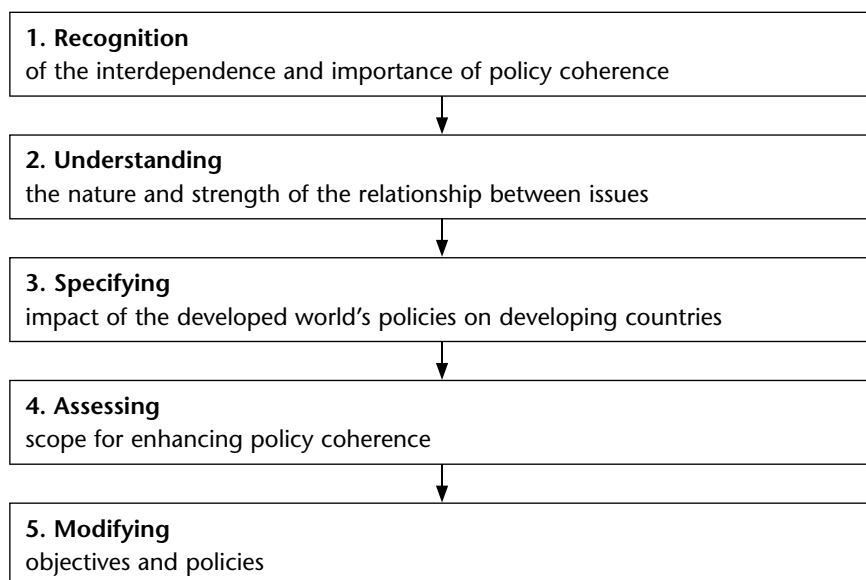
and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that lessons are learnt and practice is continually improved.

There is no single blueprint for moving towards policy coherence, but much can be learnt from the experiences of other countries. African countries especially need to share best practices and can start by utilising MDG reports. Institutional mechanisms should be examined to establish how they adopt practices which enable them to succeed in some MDGs. OECD (2004) suggests the following building blocks for coherence:

- Interaction between different structures of the government.
- Consideration of political context, commitment and leadership in prioritising issues.
- Clear policy frameworks.
- Analytical capacity and knowledge management.
- Policy co-ordination mechanisms.
- An administrative culture that promotes cross-sectional co-operation.
- The existence of policy monitoring, accountability and learning from experience.

Analytical framework

Intergovernmental relations

Intergovernmental relations concern all vertical and horizontal relationships that foster co-operation and co-ordination arrangements between units of government to attain specified objectives (De Coning & Cloete 2006). In this case, vertical relations include national, provincial, regional, district and local entities; whilst horizontal relationships include government departments and units, provinces and entities in other countries.

Picciotto et al. (2005) argue that governments enter agreements and relationships with other governments because no government can be an island. All economies of the world are interdependent, but this is especially true for developing countries. Intergovernmental relations are influenced by several factors. Du Toit et al. (1998) mention the following:

- Resonating constitutional systems, whether in a federal or unitary government.
- Centralisation of power.
- Fiscal relations.
- Geographical considerations.
- Historical considerations.
- Demographic considerations.
- Cultural and ethnic considerations.
- Infrastructural and administrative considerations.
- Political ideologies.

Coherence between democratisation and liberalisation

This section deals with the question of how democratisation affects liberation; and how liberalisation affects democratisation.

In answering this question I propose that we look at the relationship between the economy and democratisation. Generally research holds that economic development promotes democratisation (Huntington 1994). Wealthy countries, with a few exceptions such as oil-rich states, are generally democratic states. Poor countries are likely to be undemocratic. There are however some exceptions. Huntington argues that transitions to democracy

are heavily concentrated among countries at the upper middle-income level of development. Huntington also proposes that economic liberalisation and reform promote economic development. This is not necessarily true in all instances, as illustrated by the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries which achieved very high rates of economic growth in the 1930s and 1950s, respectively. In the contemporary world, state ownership, control and regulation have, however, generally created problems for economic development. It can therefore be argued that economic development is more likely to occur with less state economic control than with more.

It can also be argued that economic reform requires a strong state because economic liberalisation imposes especial hardship on some groups. Across-the-board inflation affects all sectors of the population, and in such cases political opposition will be much stronger. Research informs us that liberalisation must come first, followed by democratisation. Democratising first by opening the political system is likely to complicate economic reform. The first step is to depoliticise economic decision making.

Huntington (1994) suggests that new democratic governments go about introducing economic reforms in the following ways:

- These governments need overwhelming electoral legitimacy – they have to be products of free and fair elections, and attain majority rule.
- They need forceful leadership by the executive to manage economic hardship and the chaos reform produces.
- There is a need for 'shock treatment'.
- Economic reforms must be prepared to accept a certain amount of backsliding and make concessions to groups which either suffer tremendous economic hardships or have sufficient political power to obstruct the reforms if their demands are not met.
- Reform leaders need to adopt an inclusive approach by co-opting opposition leaders into the reform process.
- Governments should seek outside assistance to enhance capacity, strengthen the resource base and adapt new or best practices.

Redistribution

Research evidence suggests that redistribution can be used as a mechanism to manage transition. Redistribution is a moral and political imperative,

particularly when a government deals with deprivation of the previous regime. In the transition to democracy, severe inequality tends to eventually generate intense and often violent political polarisation. To avoid this inequality, socio-economic reforms must be undertaken. If a new order fails to dramatically improve the circumstances of the majority, disaffection may grow and society may face a level of conflict which cannot be resolved democratically.

Van der Berg and Siebrits (1994) argue that a new government has to act to reduce poverty, but it will fail unless it also ensures conditions for rapid economic growth. To ensure this, it requires a mix of generous welfare programmes and increased private investment. It must however also be cognisant of the fact that redistribution cannot be left solely to market performance. The poor must benefit and racial divides have to be reduced in a manner that provides tangible benefit to previously disadvantaged sectors of the population. The transtition will otherwise be unstable.

To be stable, democracy has to be deemed legitimate by the majority of the population. Democracy will not be valued unless it deals effectively with social and economic problems and achieves a modicum of order and justice. Gilomee and Schlemmer (1994) point out that democracy is likely to face numerous challenges; especially poverty, inequality and general development. Poverty and lack of development will inhibit or destabilise political freedom, and expectations and demands placed on the political system will overwhelm and confuse policy-makers. Governments are therefore forced to limit choice and sometimes take unpopular decisions. For democracy to cohere with the majority's demands and expectations, it is necessary that there be economic development, creating the impression that government delivers benefits.

Coherence with MDGs

For South Africa to be able to meet MDGs its macro policy needs to be biased in favour of development. MDGs represent an international commitment to human development and embody several national and international development initiatives. The Millenium Development system contains eight goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators. Whilst it is acknowledged that MDGs are not the only solution to developmental challenges, it must be noted that this set of goals enables a 'kick-start' to development that takes the links between different sectors and needs into account.

In South Africa the MDGs provide the impetus to reverse the deterioration in human development caused by apartheid. The decades of apartheid rule were characterised by increased economic deprivation and the general impoverishment of the black majority; leading to high incidences of poverty, the dire effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, increasing unemployment, and general reversals in human development indicators. It is anticipated that if government programmes are in line with the MDGs there will be acceleration in human development and integration of the poor in the global economy.

Coherence with MDGs also entails that government policies be aligned with a development-state agenda. This is important in overcoming post-colonial problems and the failure of institutions of governance and policy implementation. Being a developmental state means that South Africa needs to develop a precondition that enhances the relationship between patterns of governance and development (Picard & Garity 1995). Research (Adelman & Yeldam 1999; Bagchi 2000; Edigheji 2005; Mkandawire 2001) reveals that for South Africa to succeed in meeting the MDGs it needs to confront and deal with issues such as:

- The failure to prioritise economic development and mobilise capital and civil society around development by ensuring broad-based benefits from growth.
- The narrow export orientation of industrial policy, without adequate orientation towards diversification and the protection of the domestic market as the basis for new industries.
- The inability to direct resources to new industries.

In general, a developmental state will maintain mass support, improve the living standards of the poor and introduce economic programmes that are aimed at supporting and empowering the poor.

Co-ordination of government efforts

In an effort to meet the MDGs the South African government has introduced integrated development programmes such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), the Breaking New Ground (BNG) Programme, the Urban Renewal Programme and the Integrated Rural Development Programme. EPWP seeks to promote the use of labour-intensive methods, and thereby alleviate poverty by providing employment and skills resulting from experience

gathered during employment. BNG is a pilot programme for the delivery of housing. These programmes are driven by the national Department of Public Works and the Department of Housing, respectively. These departments collaborate with other relevant departments and stakeholders to deliver sustainable solutions.

The central question in South Africa is whether these different programmes have sufficient resources and whether there is any co-ordination between them. Moss (2006) argues that there are differences of opinion between national, provincial and local officials regarding the feasibility of achieving some policy targets. Generally, national government officials are optimistic that the targets set in programmes such as BNG and EPWP are achievable. They acknowledge, however, that policies are often complicated and difficult to implement. This is often the case with policies dealing with transversal or inter-sectoral issues. It would appear that each unit or department will have its own interpretation. For instance, a province may overlook certain policies in order to address local or provincial issues that need urgent attention. Local government officials, on the other hand, might contend that conditions on the ground dictate that some policy prescripts are not achievable. This trend can be ascribed to the disjuncture between the needs of communities and what government can realistically afford to provide – often referred to as vertical integration.

Vertical integration poses challenges to service delivery. Intergovernmental structures are part of vertical integration in the government system. A number of intergovernmental structures are created to facilitate integration between levels and organs of government. Participation in structures like these differs according to the ranks of government officials. For instance, there are high-level structures that cater for political heads and senior management. Other similar structures are set at operational level. In this way functions are decentralised. Moss (2006) argues that functions devolved in this way are treated as peripheral, not priority.

Coherence also entails horizontal integration, which is embodied in inter-departmental structures that facilitate co-ordination between activities of different departments. Moss (2006) points out that this level of co-ordination ranges from clusters consisting of heads of department through to ad hoc structures created by officials at operational levels. Despite the existence of interdepartmental co-ordination between the activities or functions of

various departments, practical interdepartmental policy implementation is almost non-existent. This accounts for the absence of joint planning initiatives between various departments. This is probably because priorities of one department are often the same as the priorities of another department. The implementation of joint projects therefore becomes the responsibility of the lead department, and other departments provide minimal support. Collective ownership is required for horizontal integration to be successful, and departments need to align their priorities to reduce fragmentation and duplication in expending resources.

Coherence of macro policy

Coherence of macro policy requires that government programmes be driven by the people, and that priorities for development come from within communities. In other words, development programmes should not be imposed on communities, but should rather be the result of decisions taken by communities through joint planning, participatory decision-making and consensus (Lodge 2002).

South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (RSA 1994), with its two broad aims of alleviating poverty and reconstruction of the economy, seem to resonate well with coherence issues. It proposes balanced growth in order to bring about development and has played a major enabling role in integrating growth with economic reconstruction and social development. It proposed five ways to combine growth with development:

- Meeting basic needs.
- Upgrading human resources.
- Strengthening the economy.
- Democratising the state and society.
- Reorganising the state and the public sector.

The RDP proposes a people-driven process to deepen democracy by empowering people affected by development projects to participate in their planning. It reinforces economic reconstruction with social development.

Hirsch (2005) argues that the RDP resonates with the African National Congress (ANC) Freedom Charter, which is steeped in democratic liberalism. The Freedom Charter aims to bring about a national democratic revolution

through the construction of a social order in which all forms of oppression and exploitation are eradicated. In the years leading up to 1994, the ANC was faced with a challenge from the private sector, which was skeptical about the policies of the liberation movement. Ginsberg (1998) points out that business lost confidence and the economy was negatively affected. At the same time, government wanted to create more jobs. As a result, the government relented and adopted a business-friendly macro-economic policy known as the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy in 1996. This strategy sidelined the RDP and committed the government to more orthodox fiscal policies.

Seeking and Natrass (2005) point out that GEAR aims to create an environment which favours investment. Private investment did grow in South Africa after the adoption of the GEAR strategy, but Seekings and Natrass (2005) argue that only two of GEAR's major components were implemented by 2004: the reduced budget deficit and trade liberalisation. Labour market reforms and privatisation were not implemented. The pattern of labour market reforms contributed to GEAR not meeting its targets. Before the strategy was announced, the government passed the Labour Relations Act (1995) which entrenched trade union powers by introducing a centralised bargaining system and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997) which regulated employment conditions.

In assessing GEAR, Saul (2005) argues that although GEAR is rhetorically aligned to the RDP's socially progressive objectives, its central pillars were fashioned in accordance with standard neo-liberal principles. Saul equates GEAR to the International Monetary Fund's structural adjustment programmes. According to Saul, GEAR creates an imbalance and incoherence in terms of people's needs. It favours business, and may aggravate social exclusion. Terreblanche (2002) asks: If the state's role in the economy is fundamentally reduced, who will restructure the economy? Who will counter the power of the dominant power? Who will devise the urgently needed developmental state? If the role of the state is rolled-back, who will see to it that the poorest half of the population does remain marginalised, impoverished and neglected?

Joined-up policy

Proponents of a joined-up policy (Kraak et al. 2006) believe that it is relevant for South Africa and regard it as a strategy for the integration of education, the labour market and economic policies. Kraak et al. (2006) argue that this idea emerged in the 1990s, but disappeared after 1994. It has however resurfaced again. Presently there is recognition, particularly from the president's office, for joined-up implementation. Joined-up approaches represent a shift in government policy towards a more comprehensive package of socio-economic reforms reliant on more expansive fiscas. Joined-up policy is cross-sectoral policy co-ordination. It is about the necessity for reforms to collude with macro-economic, industrial and labour market reforms so that their combined impact has a better chance of meeting new conditions for global competitiveness. This view of policy and planning sees reform as constituting one component of a larger set of socio-economic reforms. Joined-up policy essentially argues that the attainment of successful reform in one institutional sphere is conditional on parallel changes occurring in others (Kraak et al. 2006).

As a means to ensure policy coherence, joined-up policy produces an equilibrium. Its policies are complementary to each other, and produce a self-reinforcing and interlocking social system. Joined-up state action requires effective co-ordination of information across a wide range of policy domains and cross-sectoral planning. For this to happen there is a need for enhanced communication between transacting economic agents.

Kraak et al. (2006) point out that the first coherent ANC macro-economic policy framework post-1990 was Growth Through Redistribution (ANC 1990), a policy document drawn up in collaboration with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). The document posits that the goals of equity and economic growth need to be compatible with a comprehensive plan for social reconstruction. The ANC's emphasis on a singular process relied heavily on the notion that economic growth was achievable through extensive and rapid redistribution of wealth, income and resources. Cosatu also has it own programme, the Reconstruction Accord (Cosatu 1990), which is premised on the fact that the new social relation of production between capital and labour are essential for economic renewal. The Reconstruction Accord has five central pillars:

- A democratic political solution.
- Education and training for all.
- A programme of job creation.
- A social wage package to end poverty.
- A programme to extend socio-economic rights.

The Reconstruction Accord can be said to be the forerunner of the RDP. Both emphasise the notion of integrated policy reform linked in a single coherent plan for social reconstruction. The RDP however consciously sought to link economic policy to other policy domains.

The government has begun to emphasise certain elements of the joined-up policy. President Thabo Mbeki introduced the cluster system in his management of the Cabinet (The Presidency 2004). At the time of writing, departments operating in key areas of social reconstruction and economic policy had also been grouped together at the level of ministers and director-generals. These departments are required to plan short- to medium-term strategies for achieving presidential priorities such as job creation, poverty alleviation and human resource development. The Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services Unit of the Office of the Presidency administers and co-ordinates activities of ministers and director-generals. This presidential initiative is backed by other forms of cross-sectoral state co-ordination and planning, an example of which is the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) adopted by the Treasury in 1997. The MTEF enables government agencies to project the cost of existing and future policies over the short to medium term. The National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) is another example.

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2 Education in South Africa: Some points for policy coherence

Jonathan Carter

This chapter reviews the educational outcomes in South Africa in the period following the fall of apartheid in 1994. The first part of the chapter reviews some of the salient features of the period following South Africa's emergence as a democratic state and reviews assessments of numeracy and literacy competencies from countries whose Ministries of Education are members of the Southern and East African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (Sacmeq) consortium and other research performed on education in South Africa. These reviews and data provide the foundation for possible recommendations for policy coherence and more effective policy implementation in South Africa.

Education: The results since freedom

This section discusses the major policy shifts that have happened in education since 1994. The first part analyses the key changes in spending that occurred shortly after the new government came into power. This is followed by a discussion of relevant data on the performance of the education system.

Some features of the transition out of apartheid

When the ANC was elected into power in South Africa's first ever democratic election in 1994 the total annual spend on education was high by international standards, as was the government's deficit budget. At the time, spending in education was racially determined (Crouch & Patel 2006), inefficient (Fedderke et al. 2000) and overwhelmingly public (Crouch & Patel 2006). Access to education was also good across the board, even though blacks had only recently begun to enjoy this access.

South Africa's new government identified reduction of the deficit as a major priority, despite much criticism (Crouch & Patel 2006). This deficit-reduction process came in the form of the GEAR strategy which emphasised 'fiscal discipline' and determined that no 'significant levels of new funding would be allocated to this (education) portfolio' (Jansen 2001: 208). The new government needed to take steps to equalise spending on education, but had to equalise to the average as standardising to the highest norm would require resources that were not available. They therefore opted to use the equitable-shares approach, which distributed funds according to a predetermined formula (Crouch & Patel 2006).

In simple terms, the government's approach was to ensure that a total financial 'pie' of resources (which GEAR ensured was kept within a predetermined size) was shared equitably across the provinces based on criteria of the equitable-share formula. The provinces could thereafter determine how to use their share according to their needs and priorities. The total provincial equitable share allocated to each province is based on a two-step calculation. Effectively it estimated that the provincial equitable share should be spent by each province according to the following proportions: education (51%), health (26%), basic share (14%), institutional component (5%), and a poverty component (3%). The share each province gets of the education share (51%) is determined by the number of children of school-going age (5 to 17) (according to the census held in 2001) and actual enrolments in the 2006 snap-survey in that province relative to all provinces (National Treasury 2007). Even though education was seen as a concurrent function of national and provincial government (IGFR 2006), provinces could still decide how to allocate their funds across competing needs.

The focus of the new system in 1994 was on fairness, rather than on total amounts allocated, and at the time of writing this was still the case. Formulae for the amount of money a province could receive were made by Treasury and the norms for teacher:pupil ratios were set by the Department of Education (DoE). Because these were calculated separately, provinces had to match the amounts – often resulting in overspend on personnel (Crouch & Patel 2006). In response, the DoE required that provinces allow teacher:personnel ratios to be set by budgetary availability and then divide up the teacher pool equitably according to teacher allocation ratios.

It appears that teacher salary scales provided the basis on which the teacher ratio was calculated at a provincial level and incentives were put in place to share out teachers equitably across the schools (no teachers could however be forced to move). One result of this was that money for salaries ended up at the better schools with better qualified teachers. Therefore, even though spending was intended to be pro-poor, some elements of the system were unintentionally pro-rich, resulting in expenditure being neutral, i.e. neither pro-rich nor pro-poor (Crouch & Patel 2006). Jansen (2002: 203) is less subtle about the lack of foresight that resulted in the above and blames a lack of 'a coherent, thought-out policy implementation apparatus' that could be used to shift teachers from privileged to disadvantaged schools for the 'costs and chaos which erupted'.

Even though the spending is not pro-poor, there is widespread agreement that access to education in South Africa was good at the time of writing (Crouch & Patel 2006; Makuwa & Marimba 2006; Van der Berg & Louw 2006a), especially by African standards. Crouch and Patel (2006) present data from Louw et al. (2006) showing that dropout rates for Africans and whites have improved dramatically since 1970. Their data shows that in 1970 the dropout rate after grade one was high as 40%. Each year dropout continued through to grade 12, suggesting that a very low percentage of black Africans completed 12 years of schooling. For whites, dropout increased after grade seven, but the figures suggest that close to 50% of whites stayed at school for 12 years. According to 2001 data represented there has been a substantial decrease in the dropout rates of both whites and blacks. Dropout rates for blacks were however substantially higher than for whites; with an estimated 40% of blacks finishing 12 years of schooling, compared to more than 80% for whites. Overall dropout rates for blacks have improved, with the most significant improvement (decrease in dropouts) at grade one.

Another significant factor in post-apartheid education has been the consolidation of different schooling systems into a single department. As Jansen put it: 'nineteen racially fragmented education departments needed to be brought under one united, non-racial department. Apartheid legislation governing teachers, learners, governance and curriculum needed to be replaced' (2001: 43). Rault-Smith (2006) shows how schools that were part of different education departments during apartheid faired very differently. Many of the former Department of Education and Training (DET) and House of Representative

Schools took on the role of opposing apartheid, while the formerly white schools took on the role of providing quality teaching and learning.

In addition to the different resources schools traditionally received, it was quite possible that the complex processes required to change organisational cultures and the dynamics required for all departments to fall under one unified department were not adequately explored (see Guthrie et al. 1999, for similar discussions). This may also have affected performance at some schools. In other words, a lack of focus on organisational dynamics may have meant these schools did not adjust effectively to being places of learning. In addition, Jansen (2001) suggests that although the policies may have been produced through processes that paid an excessive amount of attention to formal participation in the policies processes, there was insufficient attention given to the implementation of these policies and a lack of understanding the factors that may undermine effective policy change. Jansen (2001: 49) further points out that material constraints faced by the DoE made it inclined to 'play up the symbolic role of policy, rather than its practical consequences'. He reiterates that education policy after apartheid was about symbolism rather than changing practice. The next section of this chapter discusses some literature that supports this perspective.

Education outcomes

Even though access to education in South Africa may be good, there is an abundance of evidence that the quality of schooling in South Africa is sub-standard (see, for instance, Crouch & Patel 2006; Fedderke et al. 2000; Makuwa & Marimba 2006; Van der Berg & Louw 2006b). This section analyses selected data to quantify this.

Makuwa and Marimba (2006) present data from the second round of the Sacmeq evaluations as part of a World Bank study undertaken in 2001. The study involved the assessment of grade 6 learners in 14 countries. Makuwa and Marimba (2006) provide a comprehensive discussion on the approach for assessing learners. For the purposes of this chapter, it is important to note that learners were tested only for numeracy and literacy skills. The results were graded into eight levels for each skills set and the descriptions of these can be seen in the appendices. The outcomes of the evaluation performed in South Africa on numeracy and literacy skills are shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: South African Sacmeq literacy and numeracy
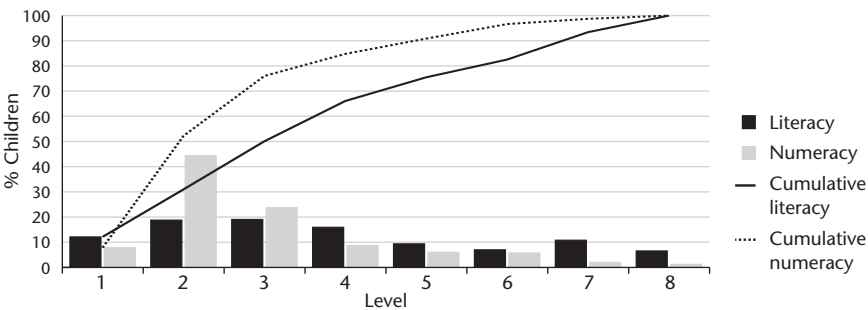
Source: Makuwa & Marimba (2006)

Table 2.1: South African scores on Sacmeq ratings showing the percentage of learners at each level of numeracy and literacy

Skills	Level							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Literacy	12.16	18.84	19.11	15.99	9.41	7.04	10.87	6.59
Numeracy	7.85	44.41	23.78	8.76	6.07	5.77	2.08	1.28
Cumulative literacy	12.16	31	50.11	66.1	75.51	82.55	93.42	100
Cumulative numeracy	7.85	52.26	76.04	84.8	90.87	96.64	98.72	100

Source: Makuwa & Marimba (2006), and own calculations

Figure 2.1 is a graphic presentation of the data in Table 2.1. The bar charts show the percentage of children that are at each level and the curves show the cumulative totals, which is accumulated starting at level 1 and goes through to level 8.

Makuwa and Marimba (2006) do not indicate a pass rate or achievement level. Fleisch (2007), however, using the same data as shown above, suggests that level 5 achieves a 50% average, and describes this as 'achieved'. Anything below this is characterised as 'not achieved'. Fleisch has access to data at a provincial level and also shows discrepancies between the provinces. That data shows that good (but only in relative terms) performance in the Western

Cape and Gauteng and, to a lesser extent, in KwaZulu-Natal, skew the averages so that they look more favourable than they should. Despite this, his analysis shows that the performance in these three provinces is substantially below the desired level. Makuwa and Marimba (2006) warn that these biases exist in the data due to the level of aggregation performed – they are however still useful as a reliable indication of existing competency levels.

The cumulative scores show that 66.1% and 84.5% of grade 6s assessed scored less than level 5 on the assessments for literacy and numeracy, respectively. The slope of the curves is potentially misleading. It would be preferable if the curves remained flat until about level 4 or 5 and started rising, preferentially exponentially, after level 6. In other words, a steeper curve at the beginning suggests that many pupils are demonstrating very low levels of numeracy and literacy competency. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 compare South Africa's numeracy scores to those of the Seychelles and Mauritius. These two countries were chosen for comparison because they performed best in each category.

Figures 2.2 and 2.3 show that South Africa under-performs substantially compared to the better-performing countries. The better performers should, however, not be seen as a benchmark of excellence. The shape of the curve for literacy in the Seychelles (Figure 2.2) is close to ideal, but it should be closer to the x-axis until about level 5 and start rising exponentially over grades 7 and 8. In contrast, South Africa's curves are convex and rise early, suggesting many pupils only achieve at the lower levels.

Figure 2.2: Cumulative literacy – South Africa vs Seychelles
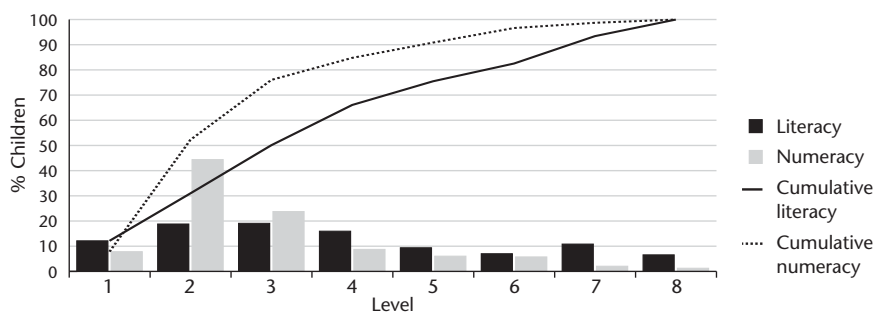
Source: Makuwa & Marimba (2006)

One can conclude from the above that there is something drastically wrong with the quality of education in South Africa and the long-term effects of poor competency are very worrying. Statistics on numeracy are worse than those for literacy, but both are far from desirable. Van der Berg and Louw (2006a), Makuwa and Marimba (2006) and Gustafsson (2005) analyse the same data and make the critical point that even when factoring in differences in socio-economic status the scores for South Africa are still lower than in the other countries.

Pauw et al. (2006), using data on unemployment from the Labour Force Survey and studies performed elsewhere, comment that the high number of unemployed graduates with qualifications which are said to be in short supply suggest that the quality of education provided at tertiary level in South Africa is of a poor standard. Kivulu (2006) suggests that a possible explanation for this is that the schooling system does not adequately prepare learners for higher education.

Based on the findings of this section, one can conclude that although access to education is good by international standards, the quality of education is poor.

Figure 2.3: Cumulative numeracy – South Africa vs Mauritius
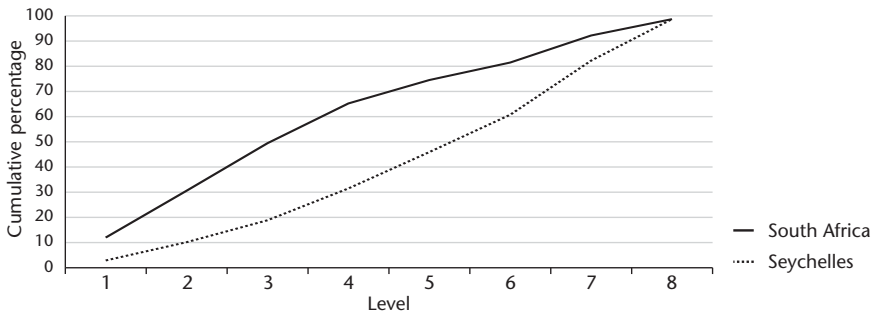
Source: Makuwa & Marimba (2006)

Influences on school performance

This section summarises the findings of the literature that makes use of the Sacmeq data as well as other data on education in South Africa. Due to the way in which the data was collected (for instance, teachers were not assessed as part of the process – Van der Berg & Louw, 2006a) and the complexities associated with measuring management, the lack of a statistical link between vulnerability (Bhorat & Oosthuizen 2006) and socio-economic status (Van der Berg & Louw 2006a) leads these authors to suggest that management at schools play a critical role in the performance of learners. These comments are supported by Van der Berg and Louw (2006b) and Fedderke and Luiz (2002).

Van der Berg and Louw (2006b) point out that there is a positive, logical link between household resources and performance at school. In a household with more resources the child is transported to school, given good nutrition, its health is invested in, and she/he is given educational materials and supplementary private tuition. However, in other work Van der Berg and Louw (2006a) show that there is no link between the child's socio-economic status and performance, except at the top two wealthiest quintiles. In these quintiles, everything is provided. Another possible way of looking at this is that below a certain level income makes no meaningful difference to a child's performance at school. This suggests that there is some form of threshold.

Fedderke and Luiz (2002) and Van der Berg and Louw (2006b) both give convincing arguments of the important role that parent involvement can play in ensuring good schooling. Parent involvement can help force decision-makers to be effective' (Fedderke & Luiz 2002: 184) and educated parents are likely to place a higher priority on education and aid learning by helping with homework (Van der Berg & Louw 2006b). Van der Berg and Louw (2006b) argue that better informed parents are able to make better use of mechanisms (such as school governing bodies) that influence the quality of schooling.

Van der Berg and Louw (2006b) also analyse the pupil:teacher ratio and show that it does have an impact, but only in the more affluent schools. They concede that there may be a number of influences in the statistical analysis that do not allow them to show the relationships at the poorer schools, but conclude that the pupil:teacher ratios will need to change substantially before such a link can be measured at the poorer schools.

As mentioned, the data does not allow for a statistical relationship between educator skills and learner performance to be measured. However, Gustafsson (2006) shows that in-service training has a tremendous effect on the quality of education outcomes. This is supported by research performed on early childhood development, which shows that mentoring teachers improves the quality of their teaching substantially (Sylva et al. 2003). Through their research, Sylva et al. (2003) make the logical conclusion that the qualifications and skills of the teacher make a significant impact on the quality of learning and teaching.

Gustafsson (2006) also shows a link between the quality of a school's physical infrastructure and performance. He cautions that it is difficult to separate out the effect of coming from a rural area, and suggests that there is evidence that the physical environment has an effect.

Looking to the future

Inferring from findings made by Van der Berg and Louw (2006a; 2006b) and comments made by Hoadley (2007) there appears to be a 'threshold of performance' in South African schools. The top two wealthiest quintiles are above the threshold and the rest are below it. At schools where resources are better they seem to be able to pass over many of the major problems, much like a ship on a high tide will float over rocks. The poorer schools are, however, not able to float over the rocks and these obstacles wreak havoc on a number of fronts. There are however exceptions. Some poor schools are able to perform by simply managing their very limited resources well. The difficulty from a macro-policy perspective is that allocating more money to schools is not necessarily going to create the right combination of factors – it is how resources are managed that is critical.

Hoadley (2007) reviews the evidence that the policy context as well as specified norms and standards for teachers places pressure on schools. This causes resources to be directed away from teaching and learning, especially at the poorer schools where social problems require more resources. Analysis of the SAMEQ data shows that poorer schools fare particularly badly, and a closer look at what the scores mean (see Appendix 2) suggests that 50% of grade 6 learners are at or below level 3, which means they can 'interpret meaning in a short and simple text by reading on or reading back' (see Table A2, level 3).

At a poor school, it is statistically likely that a high percentage of learners will only have reached competency level 3, or worse. A teacher wanting learners to follow a set of instructions will therefore have to spend time explaining the instructions before the learners can be expected to begin an exercise. Added to this, the physical environment will most likely not be conducive to learning and once learners start going through the exercise many will require additional help in interpreting the instructions because their reading ability is limited (probably only at level 1: pre-reading).

Statistics suggest that at more affluent schools learners are likely to be more competent and a teacher giving the same exercise can therefore tell them to read the instructions and leave them to do the exercise. The learning environment is also likely to be more conducive. During the limited time of a school day learners at poorer schools will therefore have less time to actually learn from the exercise, as more time is required for explanation. In addition, more learners are likely to require help, creating a distraction to other learners and further decreasing the amount of learning actually achieved. Conditions are, therefore, often working against learners, where more time is required for learning (i.e. the poorer schools). In addition, teachers at poorer schools, assuming they are dedicated, will have to invest significantly more energy during class time and are likely to have to deal with a host of social problems. At a more affluent school a teacher will most likely be able to direct social problems to a social worker who is paid by a school governing body. At the end of the teaching day, a teacher at a poorer school will often be drained and not be able to pay attention to the learning needs of those who desperately need it, which means they fall further behind and perhaps become disillusioned with school, which gives them motivation to drop out.

A possible solution is that provinces and/or districts decide on which norms and standards schools should be dealt with, based on their 'prevailing circumstances'. These circumstances are very difficult to measure with the macro data collected via processes such as censuses and the General Household Survey which forms the basis of the poverty index used by state departments (see Cronje 2007; WCED 2006). Some form of standardisation is however required. For instance, schools in the top two quintiles should be expected to deal with all the norms and standards – they should be encouraged to fundraise in order to hire full-time social workers and/or counsellors. Poorer schools should be required to deal with a minimum

number of norms or standards; but be allowed to choose which combination of norms and standards they take on as they have the best knowledge of their context. Allowing this to be a bottom-up process will enable schools to be involved in determining what is expected of them. The norms and standards they choose not to attend to should then be the focus of the provincial departments of social development through their social-service programmes (which can use NGOs to help provide services). The school's role should therefore be to identify which social services are required and the responsibility for service delivery associated with the non-attended to norms and standards should be placed on the departments of social development. The responsibility for funding these services should also be the Department of Social Development's (DoSD) responsibility. The schools, and their teachers, must be allowed to focus on providing quality learning and teaching. Schools should be encouraged to let the services be provided on the school premises, but school resources should not be drained by dealing with problems. For the time being, 'multi-sectoral' approaches should be limited to simple agreements of sharing resources, similar to the way outlined above, where individual role-players take responsibility for actually playing their role and the terms of this are clear.

The above suggestions require that we change mindsets to invest resources for dealing with problems and move away from relying on incentives and failing market forces. The more affluent schools will be able to attract resources to deal with social problems through market forces, but poorer schools need to obtain these resources in the form of targeted assistance from the relevant programmes or social department. The key to success is that all role-players take responsibility for their roles: schools must become places of learning and teaching and the DoSD must attend to social needs. Hoadley (2007) discusses the evidence that if an environment is able to become a constructive learning environment, free of distraction with a focuse on learning, it can become a caring environment too. It does however appear that the opposite does not hold. Schools should be allowed to focus on becoming learning environments before any responsibility is placed on them to become places of care.

The other important issue that needs to be addressed is the correct measurement of performance that allows for correct management. The Ministry of Finance has a favourite adage that 'what is not measured is not managed'. However, what they fail to point out is that what is measured badly is managed badly.

Mea (2006) discusses the importance of achieving the correct balance in the number of performance measurements versus their effectiveness. That discussion provides evidence that in the public sector focusing attention on fewer, better devised performance indicators results in much better service delivery than trying to measure too much. Capturing and reporting data takes time and reporting on a range of indicators is therefore a resource-intensive process (drawing resources away from service delivery). A broad range of measures also draws attention away from what the data is really saying. As Jos and Tomkins (2004) point out, badly constructed measures create the incentive to teach learners to pass the test, rather than educate them. Phurutse (2006), Kanjee (2006) and Rault-Smith (2006) discuss the inadequacies in the current measurements and the failings of their narrow focus on matric results. What we need in South Africa is a system of measurement that occurs at different stages of the learner's progression through school (Phurutse [2006] provides a good argument in this regard) and captures 'the level at which a learner thinks, understands and engages with the subject, thus producing a real and relevant indicator of a learner's competency and potential' (Rault-Smith 2006: 237).

It is clear that we need to employ holistic ratings that are standardised for the entire country, used at regular intervals through a learner's school career and measured by the matrix method suggested by Kanjee (2006). The thinking behind the matrix methodology is that if you have 10 students and you ask each student 10 different questions you can assess competency against 100 questions. Therefore, instead of requiring extensive and time-consuming tests on each student, quicker assessments can be made across a wide spectrum of competencies with fewer resources. Learners should be assessed each year by an agency independent from the school, but acting on behalf of the DoE. This agency will take responsibility for communicating results to parents/guardians through an assessment report. These assessments should test numeracy and literacy during the earlier years to ensure the foundation for later learning is achieved (see Phurutse [2006] for related discussion). At the later years, additional competencies such as scientific ability should be captured. All assessment should however be structured in a way that gives a 'real indicator of the learner's competency and potential' (Rault-Smith 2006: 237). Because the agency will need to communicate results to parents, this system gives the state an effective mechanism through which school registries can be audited and provide an alternative to or verification of the snap-surveys used by provincial departments.

The critical success factor is how the results are used. Both Van Der Berg and Louw (2006b) and Fedderke and Luiz (2000) suggest that if more information about schools performance is communicated to parents they will get more involved and pressurise schools to perform better. Therefore, we would hope that the assessment reports sent to parents and guardians will provide sufficient information to muster interest and parents' involvement. This interest is need everywhere, including schools that are performing well.

Because of the way the matrix methodology is used to assess learners, it would be misleading to report individual results. The reports should only indicate the ranges of competencies achieved per class and compare these to provincial and national averages as well as what the average should be for their age.

Reporting averages instead of individual scores poses two risks. Firstly, a parent receiving a report may believe their child is above the average and therefore think the results are an inaccurate reflection on their child if the results are not good. Secondly, the results may expose under-performing schools and enforce perceptions of them as bad schools, which could be detrimental to their sustainability. However, on the first point, parent involvement is likely to be more effective if the majority of parents are putting pressure on the school to perform, as opposed to pressure only coming from the parents of the children performing below average. Therefore, one would hope that most parents would respond to the information that their child could be performing poorly by acting as a unified force to pressurise the school to perform better. On the second point, if a school is performing badly something must be done about it as a matter of urgency and the poor results will attract attention to this where the need arises. Obviously, schools must be given the opportunity to explain their poor performance and if the major cause of the problems is because the boundaries of care (Hoadley 2007) have been pushed too far, the school must be given urgent priority by the relevant DoSD. In deciding on appropriate interventions, the department must consider the use of in-service training for teachers as a constructive and cost-effective intervention in schools. Gustafsson (2006) uses statistical evidence to suggest that this is a cost-effective way to improve school performance, which is supported by much more case-study based research performed by Sylva et al. (2003) on early childhood development. Pauw et al. (2006) suggest that government's Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (Jipsa) strategy intends using retired

people with skills to fill skills gaps and promote economic growth. This is one way already existing skills could be put to very valuable use.

These two recommendations, if implemented together, should work towards improving management at schools, a feature discussed in this chapter as one of the key influences on school performance. Parents should have a vested interest in the performance of their child/children's school, making them well placed to pressurise management to become more effective. In addition to parents, results must also be given to provincial and national departments and be made public. The DoE, through circuits and regional managers, must use the results to make school principals accountable. In instances where entire districts are under-performing, district and circuit managers must be called to account. Research performed recently by the author has gathered opinion on programme managers in government departments which suggests that an assessment process that is continual, regular, publishes the information regularly, and is used to enforce and improve performance will quickly yield results. The above suggestions have been made with this in mind.

Conclusion

The discussion on the intergovernmental fiscal system in the first part of this chapter was provided to illustrate how funding for education works in South Africa, dividing the 'pie' according to relative needs by formulae. It is a top-down process and money is allocated to needs based on political priorities and, within priorities, relative needs. At the time of writing, there was evidence of behind-the-scenes debate on the structure of the intergovernmental system. This chapter will not be enriched by a prolonged analysis of those debates, but it is worthwhile pointing out that even if the structure of the inter-governmental system changes, the processes that inform funding levels for government priorities is unlikely to change. The structures and institutions managing the funds may change, either becoming more or less centralised, but the formulaic approach that shares a limited amount of resources according to priorities and relative need is unlikely to change. Therefore, funding arrangements that unintentionally favour wealthier schools by paying better salaries for more qualified teachers will not change.

A policy for no-fee schools was gazetted (Gazette No. 28426) at the beginning of 2006. An estimated 20% of learners benefited from the policy during 2006,

and it was estimated that this would increase to 40% during 2007 (Pressly 2007). The quintiles of poor people that will benefit from the policy vary by province, but generally speaking the poorest two quintiles will benefit (in some provinces it will be the poorest three). There is also the exemption policy, which allows parents partial or full exemption from paying school fees based on their income and the level of the school fees (Gazette No. 29311). Provinces have identified funding norms per learner that vary by quintile, with the highest per-learner subsidy going to the poorest quintile. The minimum norm for funding at all levels is set at the national level. The issues discussed here regarding the threshold between the poorest three quintiles and the top two quintiles suggest that policy lines be drawn at this level. However, funding for schools in the top two quintiles should continue at current levels and continue to grow at a rate that is in sync with inflation and other growth rates of growth in fiscal spending.[1]

At the time of writing, policies that gave rise to no-fee schools and fee exemptions had been implemented too recently to assess its impact, but it has removed, to an extent, the barrier to accessing education for the poorest members of our society, This is at least a step in the right direction. However, we cannot simply assume the funds will be managed in a way that facilitates quality learning and teaching, and these schools must be subject to rigorous and frequent assessments, as any other school would. What is not clear from the gazettes and other policy documents is how shortfalls from the current levels of school earnings as a result of exemptions will be compensated at these schools. The Education Laws Amendment Act (No. 1 of 2007) and the related gazettes allow no-fee schools and schools offering fee exemptions to accept contributions from any available sources and some provinces encourage all schools to accept contributions from as many sources as possible. Whether shortfalls arise, and if they do, whether existing approaches addresses the shortfall, remains to be seen. Contingency plans should however be made clearer.

Perhaps the activities of the mid-1990s (described by Jansen [2001] as a period in which policy processes, including the participation process and new policy documents, were intended as acts of symbolism rather than processes that lead to change in practice) created a precedence that has led provinces and schools to view policy implementation as optional. Chisholm[2] suggests that schools have resisted the implementation of fee exemptions, providing more evidence of continued policy without practice. Policies are practiced within

organisational settings. For instance, the norms and standards that Hoadley (2007) refers to the requirement that teachers counsel (the practice) learners in need of assistance in a school environment (the organisational setting). The national DoE and its policy-makers need to understand the factors within schools (such as setting, organisational dynamics and willingness to change) that affect the implementation of their policies (see Cole & Jones 2005). Before policies are proposed for implementation, the possible impact these will have on staff morale and commitment must be understood, as poor morale can have a dramatic influence on the quality of learning a teacher is willing to provide.

Appendix 1: Description of Sacmeq skills competence levels

Table A1: Short titles of competence levels

Reading skills competence levels	Mathematics skills competence levels
Level 1 Pre-reading	**Level 1** Pre-numeracy
Level 2 Emergent reading	**Level 2** Emergent numeracy
Level 3 Basic reading	**Level 3** Basic numeracy
Level 4 Reading for meaning	**Level 4** Beginning numeracy
Level 5 Interpretative reading	**Level 5** Competent numeracy
Level 6 Inferential reading	**Level 6** Mathematically skilled
Level 7 Analytical reading	**Level 7** Problem solving
Level 8 Critical reading	**Level 8** Abstract problem solving

Source: Makuwa and Marimba (2006)

Table A2: Skills competence levels for reading

Description of levels	Skills
Level 1 *Pre-reading*	Matches words and pictures involving concrete concepts and everyday objects. Follows short, simple written instructions.
Level 2 *Emergent reading*	Matches words and pictures involving prepositions and abstract concepts; uses cuing systems (by sounding out, using simple sentence structure and familiar words) to interpret phrases by reading on.
Level 3 *Basic reading*	Interprets meaning (by matching words and phrases, completing a sentence or matching adjacent words) in a short and simple text by reading on or reading back.

Level 4 *Reading for meaning*	Reads on or reads back in order to link and interpret information located in various parts of the text.
Level 5 *Interpretative reading*	Reads on and reads back in order to combine and interpret information from various parts of the text in association with external information (based on recalled factual knowledge) that completes and contextualises meaning.
Level 6 *Inferential reading*	Reads on and reads back through longer texts (narrative, document or expository) in order to combine information from various parts of the text so as to infer the writer's purpose.
Level 7 *Analytical reading*	Locates information in longer texts (narrative, document or expository) by reading on and reading back in order to combine information from various parts of the text so as to infer the writer's personal beliefs (value systems, prejudices and/or biases).
Level 8 *Critical reading*	Locates information in a longer texts (narrative, document or exposition) by reading on and reading back in order to combine information from various parts of the text so as to infer and evaluate what the writer has assumed about both the topic and the characteristics of the reader; e.g. age, knowledge and personal beliefs (value systems, prejudices and/or biases).

Table A3: Skills competence levels for mathematics

Description of levels	Skills
Level 1 *Pre-numeracy*	Applies single-step addition or subtraction operations. Recognises simple shapes. Matches numbers and pictures. Counts in whole numbers.
Level 2 *Emergent numeracy*	Applies a two-step addition or subtraction operation involving carrying, checking (through very basic estimation), or conversion of pictures to numbers. Estimates the length of familiar objects. Recognises common two-dimensional shapes.
Level 3 *Basic numeracy*	Translates verbal information presented in a sentence, simple graph or table using one arithmetic operation in several repeated steps. Translates graphical information into fractions. Interprets place value of whole numbers up to thousands. Interprets simple common everyday units of measurement.
Level 4 *Beginning numeracy*	Translates verbal or graphic information into simple arithmetic problems. Uses multiple different arithmetic operations (in the correct order) on whole numbers, fractions and/or decimals.

Level 5 *Competent numeracy*	Translates verbal, graphic or tabular information into an arithmetic form in order to solve a given problem. Solves multiple-operation problems (using the correct order of arithmetic operations) involving everyday units of measurement and/or whole and mixed numbers. Converts basic measurement units from one level of measurement to another (for example, metres to centimetres).
Level 6 *Mathematically skilled*	Solves multiple-operation problems (using the correct order of arithmetic operations) involving fractions, ratios and decimals. Translates verbal and graphically represented information into symbolic, algebraic and equation form in order to solve a given mathematical problem. Checks and estimates answers using external knowledge (not provided within the problem).
Level 7 *Problem solving*	Extracts and converts (for example, with respect to measurement units) information from tables, charts, visual and symbolic presentations in order to identify, and then solves multi-step problems.
Level 8 *Abstract problem solving*	Identifies the nature of an unstated mathematical problem embedded within verbal or graphic information, and then translates this into symbolic, algebraic or equation form in order to solve the problem.

Notes

1. Comments made here have been synthesised from WCED (2006) and Cronje (2007).
2. Chisholm L, Learning about education from history, *Business Day*, 25 January 2007.

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3 Putting research on education and poverty into practice: Strategies for education and poverty research

Simeon Maile

Reducing poverty in South Africa, accelerating development and achieving the MDGs adopted at the United Nations as part of the Millennium Declaration in 2000 require better policies. The problem is that policy-makers and other stakeholders do not know which policies are most suitable when dealing with national priority issues, and they also do not know how best policies can be implemented in different contexts. A better understanding of how research in the areas of education and poverty can contribute to pro-poor policies and help improve development outcomes is crucial. The link between research and policy in development is of increasing interest to both researchers and policy-makers. Both parties are interested in knowing what works (Burton et al. 2004; Court & Young 2003a). In the developing world there is a critical need to generate knowledge that can be used to improve service delivery, policies and practices. Many research findings are available to inform policy-makers on HIV/AIDS, unemployment, quality education, poverty and service delivery, but a gap exists between research results and the desired outcome of putting them into practice. This is of particular concern in the developing world where meeting the MDGs remains a serious challenge.

Bridging the research-practice-policy gap is rarely straightforward. Efforts to narrow the gap are complicated by the system and ideological and organisational interest in getting research into policy and practice (Gripp) has highlighted that better use of research in development policy and practice can save lives, reduce poverty and improve quality of life. South Africa has committed to the MDGs. In this way it has committed itself to demonstrating that interventions in the eight specified areas are efficient, effective and based on the best evidence available. This chapter attempts to locate international discourse on Gripp within the South African context. It establishes the origins of Gripp and tracks its development in the current literature. The analysis

includes a deconstruction of concepts, frameworks, models and strategies that work for the developing world.

Rationale

There are many influences on decisions or beliefs about what ought to be done to address national priority issues such as poverty, poor education, unemployment, HIV/AIDS and lack of service delivery. Petrosino et al. (2001) point out that influential factors include ideology, politics, cost, ethics, social background, clinical experience, expert opinion and anecdote. The Gripp approach stresses moving beyond these factors to consider the results of scientific studies for policy implementation.

In the last decade there has been an increase in interest in these issues among researchers and policy-makers. Several researchers have argued that research needs to take a utilitarian approach (Davies 2004a; Landry et al. 1999; Nutley et al. 2002; Petrosino et al. 2001; Scott 2003; Solesburg 2001). Research must therefore not only be useful in helping us understand society, but must also offer guidance on how to improve policy and practice. Solesburg (2001) argues that the utilitarianism in research was influenced by funding agencies that wanted to utilise science to influence policy and practice. This has also been driven by those government departments and NGOs which are mainly concerned with livelihoods of households. Researchers have responded to this emerging focus on 'research that does not just observe', but engages with society in knowledge generation.

Gripp reduces the gap between researchers and policy-makers. Levin (2003) argues that very often researchers feel that their knowledge is not given sufficient weight in policy-making and implementation; while policy-makers feel that they cannot get timely assistance with the questions which are pertinent to them. Gripp mediates the different contexts of research and policy in the production of knowledge. It argues for stronger links between research and policy. Gripp also aims to address underlying differences and tensions between evidence and practice, research facts and practical knowledge. It links effective ways of changing practice with evidence of what works. Gripp provides learning from practice to fill gaps, and closes whatever policy implementation gaps exist. It points to strong evidence, a fit with policy and systems, identifying strengths and weakness of current practices, and

suggests what needs to be done as well as outlining which innovations exist (Levin 2003: 11).

Gripp influential factors

Gripp takes various forms in research. A plethora of researchers prefer to use the concept of evidence-based practice (EBP), while others refer to it as policy transfer. EBP has been defined as an approach that helps people make well-informed decisions about policies, programmes and projects by putting the best available evidence from research at the heart of policy development and implementation (Davies 2004a). This approach stands in contrast to opinion-based policy, which relies heavily on selective use of evidence or untested views of individuals or groups (often inspired by ideological standpoints, prejudices and speculative conjecture) (Davies 2004a). With Gripp, opinion-based policy is replaced by a more rigorous approach that gathers, critically appraises and uses high-quality research evidence to inform policy-making and professional practice.

Proponents of EBP acknowledge that not all research is of a sufficient quality to form the basis of sound policy-making. James and Lodge (2003) argue that EBP has limitations. They argue that many research studies are flawed by unclear objectives, poor research designs, methodological weaknesses, inadequate statistical reporting and analysis, selective use of data, and conclusions that are not supported by the data provided. Consequently, the notions of 'policy transfer' and 'lesson drawing' are not easily derived from research. In light of these shortcomings, Davies (2004b) argues that EBP requires a more systematic approach to searching for appropriate evidence, the critical appraisal of identified studies, and a balanced understanding of what the research evidence is saying as well as of its strength and weaknesses.

EBP faces a myriad of challenges. A burgeoning increase in policy studies means that we have to extract, from a large amount of studies, the quality and relevant studies for use in policy-making. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that studies on policy are scattered across different academic fields. What is more confusing is that some researchers use a multi-disciplinary approach. Thus, certain studies are 'hidden' in the maze of journals that are not clearly related to policy studies. In this sense, access to these studies is difficult. Some research resides in what Sechrest et al. (1979) call 'fugitive literature'. These

are government reports, dissertations and theses, conference papers and other technical documents which are often difficult to obtain. Although some may argue that 'fugitive literature' is of lesser quality because it has not been subjected to peer review (as journal articles are), such an assertion ignores internal quality assurance mechanisms utilised in delivering the final product in a masters or doctoral degree.

Inaccessibility is also manifest in the use of a minority language, which is not the language used in the public service. Another argument related to this is that it is not important to consider studies conducted outside of one's cultural context. Harlen (1997) believes that studies and findings from different jurisdictions are not relevant for consideration in the making of a policy. Therefore, context plays a role in the inclusion of a study in the policy-making process. Problems of translation and dissonance must be mediated for such studies to be considered for inclusion.

Influence on policy and practice can be attained as result of valuable human and intellectual capital. These also include tacit knowledge that has been identified by policy-makers as critical. Judgement based on experience and expertise is significant in situations where the existing evidence is incoherent, imperfect or non-existent. Gripp takes place within the context of finite resources. This means that policy-making is not just what works, but what works at what cost and with what outcomes. As a result, cost effectiveness, cost-benefit and cost utility are important in research into policy and practice. Availability and efficient use of resources are important for successful Gripp.

Policy-making also takes place within the context of values, including ideology and political beliefs. Researchers need to present their research in such a way that political undercurrents are removed. These currents create tension. The tension between values, ideology and beliefs increases the difficulty in influencing policy and practice. Similarly, habit and tradition may cause difficulty in influencing policy and practice. Political institutions such as parliament, the civil service and the judiciary have specific traditions and habits in the way they do things (Picard 2005). Sometimes these institutions do not do things in a rational way. Consequently, changing traditions and the habitual way of doing things to accommodate rationality and modernity suggested by research remains a challenge for researchers wanting to influence policy. Researchers who want to influence policy and practice may establish networks with lobbyists, advocacy groups, consultants and the civil society

who form think tanks, opinion leadership and media to exert influence. Other factors that influence policy-making and policy implementation are the sheer pragmatics of political life, such as parliamentary terms and timetables.

The origins of EBP

Gambrill (2006) points out that EBP is fairly recent and is growing because of the internet revolution. It is designed to break down the division between research, policy and practice. EBP was developed by key individuals such as Sackett and his colleagues (Sackett et al. 1996). They discovered that there are gaps showing that professionals (policy-makers) were not acting systematically on research findings. There was also a failure to start services that work and to stop services that did not work. Gambrill (2006) also points out that EBP arose out of economic concerns. Innovations in Web technology are key to the origins of EBP, as Web technology allows for quick-access databases. The development of systematic review has been another key innovation.

EBP grew out of the realisation that the traditional means of knowledge dissemination such as texts, editorials and peer review were flawed. A useful alternative was therefore needed.

According to Marston and Watts (2003) EBP evolved from medical practitioners. The evolution has left a legacy of ideas that inform decisions in policy-making and policy implementation. Evidence-based medicine is the process of systematically finding, appraising and using research findings as the basis for clinical decisions. The gold standard of evidence in medicine is the randomised controlled trial (RCT), which compares treatment with placebos to determine the most effective intervention. In a sense, evidence-based medicine (EBM) has both educative and clinical functions. The logic of EBM eventually spread to other professions such as social work and human services. However, EBM was not approved universally. Some researchers (for example, Reynolds 2000) argue that EBM promotes a narrow range of research methodologies. Researchers question the transfer of ideas from one context to another. Despite lack of approval by all scientists, EBM gained ground in the USA and UK among scientists and policy-makers. Specific agencies were established in the UK (for example, The Cochrane Collaboration) and in the USA (The Campbell Collaboration) to push for systematic up-to-date reviews of all RCTs in healthcare. Generally, these agencies conducted reviews of the

best evidence on the effects of social and educational policies and practice. In this social science, researchers and policy-makers were closer to governmental decision-making processes. Indeed, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) has provided UK scientists and research with a platform to engage in research that is useful for policy and practice. In Australia, unlike in the US and UK, there are no formal coalitions or a central co-ordinating centre to progress this agenda. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services did however spearhead talks to translate EBM into evidence-based policy.

In South Africa research councils stand a good chance of influencing policy and practice. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), for instance, makes scientific research more accessible to government departments. Its programmes provide a fertile ground for evidence-based discourse. In its research, the HSRC needs to quantify what they are doing, what works and why.

The politics of policy-making

The concept of EBP has an intuitive, common-sense logic, which partly explains how it has become naturilised in a diverse range of policy settings. The term acts as a catch phrase for scientific, scholarly and rational pursuit, which can be understood as an attempt to modernise policy-making and professionalised public service practice.

Taken scientifically, EBP reveals tensions between the rational actor model of policy and the political model. Marston and Watts (2003) explain the tension to mean that the rational actor model utilises research in the policy-making and policy implementation process; while the political model regards research as just one mode of input in the policy process. Nutley et al. (2002) argue that policy-making is inherently political. They also argue that what is considered evidence in policy-making processes is contentious. Gambrill (2006) concurs with this by saying evidence in policy-making is fraught with many questions, such as:

- Who selects the practice and policy questions on which research efforts are focused, and on what basis?
- What outcomes should be focused on, who should select them, and on what basis?

- What kinds of evidence should be used to select services, and how will these be weighed?
- Who will make the final decisions on what should stand as evidence?
- How transparent should selection of evidence for service be?
- In what ways should stakeholders be involved?
- When do we have enough evidence to recommend a practical method?
- What kinds of reviews do we have to prepare and utilise in the process?
- How do we avoid propaganda strategies?
- Will the necessary training and resources be provided?
- Will arrangement be made to learn from errors and from stakeholders?

These questions are political in that they can open up political debate in evidence-making processes. Malone (2006) argues that the issue of rationing and transparent decision-making about effectiveness and efficiency do not always fit together comfortably. Researchers have fears that politicians conveniently utilise evidence-based policy processes to shut them out and control their research work.

Marson and Watts (2003) argue that EBP is a concept that operates hierarchically. This problematises it as EBP is not a neutral concept. It has instead become a powerful tool for insiders and authorities in decision-making. Those with limited knowledge of government policy-making processes (researchers, for instance) are left out. In rejecting selection information (which is often done by researchers), all policy-makers make complex judgements about the sorts of institutional interests represented in the policy-making process. In formulating policy positions, policy-makers take into account the views of the relevant ministers, previous policy direction and, increasingly, the views of the treasury and finance departments.

Researchers who want to be counted in the process need to master the process of policy-making, and establish entry points into the systems through networks with those directly involved or those close to the decision-makers. It is not that policy-makers are not open to alternative views about policy, but rather that policy-makers need to be involved and aware of studies in the conceptualisation, design, data collection, analysis and reporting. Policy-makers often resist studies which are done without consulting them.

Coe, Luetchford and Kingdom (2002) regard the political context as a problem in realising EBP. According to these researchers, a problem arises when the

researcher is regarded as a conferrer of spurious objectivity. They argue that research is sometimes channelled within a narrow range, then wheeled out to give credibility to a predetermined policy route. Thus, research may be commissioned in an attempt to provide evidence to support political positions, rather than to provide a genuinely objective exploration of solutions to a problem. The process can be distorted too, particularly when decisions are made by small groups of government officials, consultants, businesses and trade union officials who sometimes use research simply to prove they have consulted a wider group.

Commissioning of research is done as a way of reacting to issues that have come to the fore, and thereafter avoiding having to take action. In this way, researchers are used by bureaucrats and politicians to delay the implementation of politically unpalatable, but necessary, policy solutions. Commissions are protracted and issues are recommissioned several times. The lessons from previous research are ignored in order to allow for subsequent research in the same area until politicians are happy with the results.

In some cases researchers encounter situations where dominant national and international political ideological discourses apparently restrict research influence to an extremely narrow range. Governments are not ready to hear about options and alternatives – even if they are well researched and evidence-based. The challenge is for researchers to adapt to changing priorities. Researchers need to understand the language and agendas of ministers and policy-makers.

Models of EBP

Models of knowledge utilisation focus on four alternative models (Landry et al. 1998): a science push model, a demand pull model, a dissemination model, and an interaction model. While each model supports the importance of evidence in policy-making, there are distinct characteristics which separate one model from another.

The science push model

This model stresses the supply of advance in research findings as the major determinant of knowledge utilisation. It is based on the assumption that the needs of decision-making will compel policy-makers to use research, and high-quality knowledge will automatically be rapidly captured and used. In this way, utilisation follows a learner sequence from supply of research advances to utilisation by decision-makers and practitioners. The main critique of this model is that transfer of knowledge to users is not automatic in a context where no one assumes responsibility for its transfer. This model is also criticised for its raw information, which is not a usable knowledge. These criticisms have stimulated the emergence of the demand pull model.

The demand pull model

In this model the initiative shifts from the researchers to users who define problems and ask researchers to conduct research that contributes to identifying and assessing alternative solutions to specific problems. This approach generates a customer–contractor relationship where the practitioner and decision-makers are like customers who define what research they want; and where the researchers are like contractors that execute contracts in exchange for payment. This model also follows a linear sequence which starts with the identification of the research problem by the customers. Knowledge utilisation is explained only by the needs of the users. Research is not done for scholarly purposes, but to address the needs of the clients. This model is difficult to manage, and challenges researchers' sustainability as user's interests change and are politically driven. The research findings may also be tampered with to satisfy the client's needs.

The dissemination model

The dissemination model was developed in response to the fact that while examples of unplanned knowledge transfer existed, knowledge transfer was not automatic. This model suggests that a step should be added to research activities by developing dissemination mechanisms to identify useful knowledge, and transfer it to the potential users. Dissemination is deemed to occur when a potential user becomes aware of the research results. This

model utilises two determinants: first, the context attributes and types of research results, and, second, the dissemination effort. The main shortcoming of this model is that potential users are neither involved in the selection of the transferable information, nor involved in the production of the results.

The interaction model

This model suggests that knowledge utilisation depends on various disorderly interactions occurring between researchers and users, rather than on linear sequences beginning with the needs of researchers or the needs of users. It assumes harmonisation of the culture of science with the culture of users; and is premised on the notion that the more sustained and intense the interaction is between researchers and users, the more likely the research will be utilised. It suggests giving greater attention to the relationship between researchers and users at different stages of knowledge production, dissemination and utilisation. It also challenges traditional ways of disseminating information, such as publishing in scholarly journals, because they are not accessible in terms of language and resources.

Routes towards impact: Strategies and mechanisms

This section deals with strategies and mechanisms that researchers can employ to ensure that their research makes an impact on government policy. To start with, researchers need to ensure that their research is relevant. It is futile to focus too much on issues that only affect a small number of people. Academic research is removed from the daily reality of most people, and some academics are isolated from reality in that they deal with ideal situations which do not exist. In some cases society and the academic community appear to be two wholly unconnected communities. In fact, the problem reflects sheer ignorance or lack of innovation by academic research leadership because the answer lies in South Africa's National Research and Development Strategy (2002). This policy clearly spells out that there are issues that are of national importance because they deal with challenges that are experienced by the majority of people. The issues are:

- Understanding the social impact of disease.
- Reducing poverty.

- Developing care and support for HIV/AIDS strategies.
- Delivering quality education.
- Developing innovative strategies to overcome unemployment.
- Developing novel regimes to enhance utilisation of indigenous knowledge.
- Developing viable capacities for improved service delivery.
- Devising strategies for crime reduction.

These issues connect researchers with government officials and society at large, and should form part of a core academic effort. Micro-studies will not have an impact.

Maximising the interface with the policy environment is also critical. Researchers need to establish communities of practice (CoP) which include policy-makers and practitioners. CoP is a concept that is well established, and is useful to increase the impact of research on policy. Coe et al. (2002) guide researchers by saying that effective research is about the political moment. Researchers need to identify issues that resonate with the current political dispensation and success depends on reading policy environment correctly. Researchers need to know how government works, as policy is political rather than academic. They also need to interface with policy-makers. Researchers need to figure out who has a voice, who is open to persuasion, and send the right signals to the right person. When they are known to the powers that be, they have to build trust by establishing personal relationships. It is also important to note that governments are always sensitive to criticism. Therefore, researchers need to look for proxy critics such as MPs. This serves to illustrate that researchers need to engage with government on a flexible basis. This means that researchers must be able to absorb pressure and deliver on time. Overly-generous project timelines are likely not to work. Researchers often want perfection, while policy-makers want something credible.

Researchers must also act on their findings. It is vital for researchers to open up communication channels with policy-makers and the media, and to critically engage with 'street-level bureaucrats' responsible for implementation of policy. To succeed in 'getting heard', researchers need to partner with advocacy groups – who also need research to substantiate their arguments. This must however be done with care so as not to alienate policy-makers.

Table 3.1: What researchers can do to have an impact on policy

What researchers need to know	What researchers need to do
Political context • Who are the policy-makers? • Is there policy-maker demand for new ideas ? • What is the source/strength of resistance? • What is the policy-making process? • What are the opportunities and timing for input into formal processes? **Evidence** • What is the current theory? • What are the prevailing narratives? • How divergent is the new evidence? • What sort of evidence will convince policy-makers? **Links** • Who are the key stakeholders in the policy discourse? • What links and networks exist between them? • Who are the intermediaries and what influences them? • Whose side are they on?	• Get to know the policy-makers, their agendas and the constraints they operate under. • Identify potential supporters and opponents. • Keep an eye on the horizon and prepare for opportunities in regular policy processes. • Look out for (and react to) unexpected policy windows. Allow sufficient time and resources • Establish credibility over the long term. • Provide practical solutions to problems. • Establish legitimacy. • Build a convincing case and present clear policy options. • Package new ideas in familiar theory or narratives. • Communicate effectively. • Get to know the other stakeholders. • Establish a presence in existing networks. • Build coalitions with like-minded stakeholders.
How to do it	
Political context • Work with the policy-makers. • Seek commissions. • Line up research programmes with high-profile policy events. • Reserve resources to be able to move quickly to respond to policy windows. **Links** • Partnerships between researchers, policy-makers and communities. • Identify key networkers and salespeople. • Use informal contacts.	**Evidence** • Build up respected programmes of high-quality work. • Use action research and pilot projects to demonstrate benefits of the new approach. • Use a participatory approach to help with legitimacy and implementation. • Clear strategy and resources for communication from the start. In real communication 'seeing is believing'.

Source: Court & Young (2003b)

Conclusion

Getting research into policy and practice is a delicate process which requires a variety of skills. Researchers who want to be successful in the research industry will be required to re-think the way they have been doing research. Research remains an important mechanism to bring about the changes we value for the development of society. Doing research for the sake of doing research is a waste of public resources. Scientific public knowledge should therefore benefit society. We can ensure that society benefits from scientific research by introducing some of the models, strategies and mechanism argued for in this chapter.

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4   Education and poverty reduction/eradication: Omissions, fashions and promises

Yusuf Sayed

This chapter critically examines the rhetoric and reality behind what can be considered as one of the key education goals of most national education policies; namely, that education is a key driver for poverty reduction and elimination. While this goal is indeed laudable, there is a little consensus about what exactly this implies and what interventions and strategies are appropriate for achieving it.

Taking a broad-based approach, this chapter provides an exploratory map of some of the key issues underpinning this assumption and considers promising education policy avenues and blind alleys. I begin by exploring some of the key frameworks that underpin development and education policies to eradicate poverty. I then pay attention to specific polices and strategies of ensuring a pro-poor education orientation. I conclude by considering some key aspects of developing a holistic and comprehensive approach to poverty reduction and elimination in and through education.

Poverty reduction as the cornerstone of education policy

The link between education and poverty reduction/elimination is a complex one and is subject to much debate and contestation. It is evident that the link between education and poverty is neither a linear nor a simple cause-and-effect relationship. It can best be conceived as cyclical prelateship in that the lack of education is perhaps on the most powerful determinant of poverty and unequal access is strongly related to poverty. Thus, the current estimated 77 million children (GMR 2007) who do not have access to education are not only poor, but fundamentally suffer from lack of access because of the multidimensional nature of poverty. This is why the reduction and elimination of poverty is becoming a key component of education policy and why poverty reduction strategies feature centrally in government efforts

at national development. As discussed later, it is however sometimes unclear what this means.[1]

The reduction and elimination of poverty is also a prominent aspect of education discourse due to the major emphasis that multilateral agencies and donors have given poverty reduction as a key component of aid.[2] The pro-poor agenda is therefore also an agenda of international agencies spearheaded by the work of the World Bank. This pro-poor agenda is very much evident in the MDGs which, by 2015, aim to halve the number of people living in absolute poverty.

The linkages between education and poverty raise many important issues for debate and discussion, including:

- What is meant by poverty?
- How is poverty measured?
- What are the appropriate development frameworks and broad policy approaches?[3]

Answers to these questions do, to an extent, depend on who is asking them and what the understanding of poverty elimination is. For the purpose of this chapter, I will focus on four frameworks for understanding the link between education and poverty: the human capital framework, the human rights framework, the human capability framework and the social exclusion framework.

Education for growth

The human capital approach, which is rooted in the philosophy of utilitarianism as the measure of welfare and of utility maximisation as a behavioural assumption, asserts that investment in education leads to the formation of human capital as the key factor in economic growth. Through education, people develop skills and product knowledge which is transformed into increased productivity, resulting in increased earnings and increased economic growth. Growth is thus the end-point of investment in education and education is instrumental in promoting growth and raising earnings. Such an approach has spawned a great deal of research in the economics of education tradition, focusing on whether education is productive and how the cost and benefits of education compare across different levels. The classic

example of this research is rates-of-return research. While such research has been heavily criticised for its methodological approach and its assumptions, it has, nonetheless, underscored the importance of investing in education to promote growth.

Education as a right

In contrast to the human capital approach, the human rights approach asserts the importance of education as an intrinsic condition of being human and as an end in itself. The provision of education is not a means towards another end, such as economic growth. The provision of education adds value and meaning to every individual and should be provided without any form of discrimination or limitation. This idea is at the core of the human rights approach. The human rights approach further asserts that realising the right to education also enables people to access other human rights such as health, freedom and security.

The right to education, particularly in the case of children, is highlighted in several important documents, including the UN Declaration on Human Rights (United Nations 1959), the UN General Assembly's Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959 and the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989) by the UN Assembly in 1989. The denial of access to education is a denial of a fundamental human right, the realisation of which is generally accepted to be the responsibility of state parties held accountable for its implementation.

Education and capability

In contrast to the human capital approach, the late 1980s and 1990s witnessed a strong interest in paradigms of development which challenged previous narrow economist and reductionist approaches in which development was reduced to economic growth. The most significant thinker on this was Amartya Sen, who developed the theory of human capability. His idea of development as freedom focused attention on development as the expansion of peoples' freedoms to enhance their valued 'beings' and 'doings'.[4] As a holistic approach to development, it emphasised the intrinsic value of education; as an opportunity, an entitlement and a means for improving life. In this framework

poverty can be identified as capability deprivation, a deprivation that is intrinsically significant because it reduces a person's ability to give value to their lives by their 'doings' and 'beings'.

The capabilities approach of Sen is an extension of early work on human development, particularly that of Mahbub ul Haq. His work, which led to the development of the *Human Development Report* (United Nations 2006) and the *Human Development Index* (United Nations 2007) is premised on the idea that the purpose of development is the enlargement of people choices and that this requires the meeting of basic needs such a health, education and housing. His work challenged the narrow economist view of poverty defined as income poverty and argued that the purpose of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives.

Promoting inclusion through education

It could be argued that while there are many significant differences between the three approaches outlined above (such as an instrumental versus a constitutive orientation to education), the conceptual and methodological focus is on individuals – specifically the individual poor. This is why a social exclusion perspective is promising. A social exclusion perspective enables policy-makers and analysts to understand processes of marginalisation and deprivation within and across countries, focusing on the interlocking nature of inequalities and placing an emphasis on groups (though recognising that groups are heterogeneous). Such an approach adds to the capability approach by focusing on the ways in which the processes of inclusion and exclusion are produced and reproduce and can be altered. It enables an education focus which looks at those who are poor and those who are not, those who are excluded and those who are included, those who are doing the excluding and those who are doing the including. This approach asserts the need for a more refined group-based differentiation of the poor and strategies which takes into account groups who are excluded. For example, the landless poor have different experiences and needs to the ethnic poor, and the urban poor experience poverty differently from the rural poor.

The brief and schematic account of these frameworks provides the context for analysing policies and strategies for increasing education opportunities for the poor. Moreover, what is considered valuable and how the cause and

effects of poverty are understood, significantly influences the choices that are made. The framework in which poverty is analysed is significant for the following reasons:

- Frameworks matter for the policy choices that are made. A social exclusion perspective would focus on the need to break down exclusionary barriers through policies such as redistribution and anti-discrimination polices, while a human rights approach would emphasise and focus on the extent to which state obligations are being upheld and challenged when breaches occur. Thus, framework influences what is privileged in policy determinations.
- Frameworks affect what is emphasised. An instrumental approach, such as the human capital framework, subordinates investment in education to the needs of the economy. A capability approach, by contrast, focuses on education as an end in itself.
- Frameworks are signigicant because what they capture is the essentially constructed and contested nature of policy. As will be discussed later, there is no single or correct strategy for education to lead to poverty reduction. There are choices, and choices are made in particular contexts, at particular times, and with respect to particular social and political orders.

Pro-poor education policies and strategies: Promising avenues and blind alleys

While it is evident that all frameworks make reference, implicitly or explicitly, to education bifurcated by those who view education as a means and those who view education as an end. Valued as an intrinsic condition of being human, there is less consensus about what the implications of this are for actual interventions and strategies. Let me illustrate this point by citing Rodrik (2007) who, in summarising the growth and poverty reduction debate, argues that a strong correlation between economic growth and poverty reduction tells us nothing because it is 'compatible with both of the following arguments: (1) only policies that target growth can reduce poverty and (2) only polices that reduce poverty can boost overall growth'. He asserts that the key question is what works, how and under what circumstances. This is particularly true when we ponder the question of what kinds of education policies and strategies lift the poor out of poverty.

Before I turn to polices and strategies, let me make a few qualifying general remarks. First, lifting people out of poverty is important not as an end in itself, but because it enables people to expand the real freedoms they value. Second, the capability approach has generated a rich debate on what a valued life might be and what counts as human well-being. This is an age-old debate stretching back to Aristotle, and more recently elaborated by Nussbaum and others. Again I do not wish to recount the debate, but to assert that the expanded framework for understanding poverty as it relates to education brings to the fore the necessity to have an intensely political discussion about what is normatively desirable in society. The choice of polices and strategies are not technocratic concerns, but require inclusive, extensive and thorough ongoing public discussion about what the normative goals are, who they are for and how they can be monitored. These are important discussions, for they not only indicate the direction of travel but also the path that is likely to be taken. Third, a fundamental and irreducible policy minimum is that what matters in education is the learning gains of children and, in particular, those who are poor.

Let me begin the discussion of policies by briefly recapping the benefits of education based on the available evidence drawn principally from the economies of education literature. This chapter argues that it is incontrovertible that both the quantity measures in the years of schooling and quality proxy by learning attainment measured on standardised tests are instrumental in economic growth and increased earnings. More recent research asserts that it is educational quality which is more significant for the growth and enhancement of learning. It is also argued that increased education measured in number of years of schooling is beneficial to productivity improvements in rural growth and urban self-employment. Micro-level study, in particular, has shown those who are illiterate are income poor, while poverty is virtually non-existent in educated households. The simple reality is that no well educated, literate population is poor. However, it should be recognised that while this evidence is compelling, it has a limited and narrow focus on the relationship between income poverty and education, ignoring processes of marginalisation and exclusion which a focus on capabilities and inclusion.

There is substantial research in the economics of education which posits significant health gains from education, particularly for women. A correlation can be drawn between increasing levels of education and a decline in fertility

rates and a rise in age of marriage. Education is regarded as the best 'social vaccine' for HIV prevention and improved nutritional well-being. Life expectancy also rises with levels of education, while child mortality declines. Less stated, but equally important, is the benefit of education for social cohesion. More extensive education coverage leads to more active citizen participation in political processes and results in stronger democracies.

None of this should be new or surprising. There are well founded bodies of research evidence documenting the effect and benefits of education. What is less clear from a public policy perspective is what the important triggers and interventions as well as policy gaps are. Bearing in mind the caveats mentioned above, it seems that there are two key areas of intervention which are necessary for developing polices to raise educational attainment of the poor. The first relates to schooling factors, including availably, quality and equity, which can make the learning experience les than optimal. The second set of factors relates more directly to poverty, including influencing direct and opportune costs and the low level of earnings which inhibits the demand and entry into education.

Increasing the provision and coverage of early childhood care and education

The GMR 2007 shows that the provision of early childhood care and education (ECCE) is important for improving health and nutrition, particularly for children under five years of age (GMR 2007). ECCE also has many education benefits for later years of schooling, including greater likelihood of enrolment, enhanced language development, increased retention and higher achievement, particularly for the poor. It is however the very poor who don't have access to ECCE. To quote the 2000 Nobel Prize winner for economics, James Heckman: 'It is a rare public policy initiative that promotes fairness and social justice and at the same time promotes productivity in the economy and in society at large. Investing in disadvantaged young children is such a policy' (Heckman 2003).

Increasing availability

One of the factors that limits access to education for the poor is the availability of schooling. Schools are either not available in areas where the

poor are located or where they are available they are not responsive to need. A specific example which illustrates the point is schooling availability for migrant populations. Migrants (including internally displaced persons) find it hard to access education services because, by definition, their existence is not recognised by official authorities or they settle in urban slums where education services are under-provided. Research into the non-state sector in certain countries has identified an increase in private schools in urban slums catering for migrant children.

The challenge of good quality

The challenges of quality face both Latin America and the Caribbean, which both have high rates of participation in the schooling system. On the one hand, low quality in systems of high rates of participation results in problems of repetition, retention and completion. On the other hand, expanding access through increased availability and other strategies in conditions of low quality has an adverse effect on the demand for education and results in greater inefficiencies.

As the GMR Quality Report (2007) shows, the starting point for good quality is to place learners at the centre of the process. The simple reality is that many students do not leave formal schooling with the basic minimum skills. According to the results of international assessment tests, approximately 65% of South African school leavers are functionally illiterate. Clearly what occurs in schools has a significant bearing on what skills people leave with and what they are therefore able to do once they enter the formal or informal labour market. According to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (Timms) 2003 study (quoted in Hanushek 2006), only 29% of South African eighth-grade students were able to answer a basic subtraction question correctly. Random guessing would have yielded a 25% correct answer.

Clearly, quality matters more than the number of years of schooling for the poor as the wealthy have access to social and cultural capital which advantages them in schooling and compensates for poor quality. Improving quality involves six inter-related factors:

- Creating inclusive and responsive learning environments so that schools are safe and healthy learning spaces are free from discrimination.
- Ensuring that there is effective teaching and learning in schools. Instruction

in one's home language consistently appears as a key variable in enhancing learning. More importantly, the teaching of 'values' is a critical component of the curriculum in terms of the values education imparts. These values provide a broad-based understanding of living and working as critical and active citizens in society. However, it is important to ask whose values and voices are being heard and whose are not.

- Effective learning resources are vital in ensuring quality learning environments. For many learners in developing countries the reality is that there is an acute shortage of quality textbooks, adequate classrooms, etc.

- Quality teaching relies on the presence of qualified, motivated and committed teachers. As the GMR Quality Report (2007) shows, research evidence consistently points to the teacher as the single most important determinant in effective learning. However, what is less clear is agreement on the characteristics of what makes a good teacher and the incentive needed for them to perform effectively.

- Effective assessment is at the heart of ensuring that learning is effective. Developing robust monitoring and assessment systems to monitor student performance is key to improving learning as it deepens the understanding of which policies are working and which are not, or where change is most needed.

- Improving institutional capacity is vital to improving quality. Two key factors emerge in relation to the characteristics of institutions. First is the degree of accountability – the more schools are held accountable, the more effective they are. The second is the degree of support and the types of incentives received at the institutional level to ensure that schools focus on and promote effective learning. Incentives which key into learning are generally the most effective.

Lowering the cost of education

Improving the supply and quality of schooling is a necessary but not sufficient condition for improving education opportunities for the poor. For the poor to benefit from the availability of good quality schooling, it is necessary to lower the cost of education (both a direct and opportunity cost) for poorer households. Several studies have shown that low levels of household income for the poor who have to meet education needs as well as other basic needs

such as food and shelter is a key reason why many do not attend or complete basic education. Strategies which offset costs of education for households with low incomes are therefore critical to increase educational attainment. The most effective strategy for offsetting household costs still remains the abolition of school fees. This process must however be carefully managed.

Affirmative action programmes are by definition programmes to increase access, retention and completion of education targeted at specific groups. These can take the form of transfers (cash or in kind) and can be conditional or unconditional. They include cash transfer programmes, scholarships, stipends, nutrition schemes, vouchers and school feeding programmes. While some are effective in particular contexts, there is not as yet sufficient rigorous and systematic research which documents the cost-effectiveness of these programmes, nor is there sufficient research about their impact on student learning. The major evaluations of voucher schemes, for example, show mixed evidence regarding their impact on learning, their cost in relation to benefits compared to other programmes and the transaction cost. There is currently a dearth of robust randomised, controlled experiments about such programmes. For affirmative action interventions to be effective they need to be well targeted, sustainable and cost effective.

Up to this point I have spoken about schooling and education somewhat interchangeably. However, it is crucial to note that 144 million adults in sub-Saharan Africa lack basic literacy skills (GMR 2007). Thus, any effective strategy to eliminate poverty and increase life opportunities must focus on providing education to adults. This is also very true in the South African context where the adults of today have borne the brunt of the historical processes of marginalisation and inequity. The provision of effective literacy programmes, in particular, should be an important priority for national government and international agencies.

There are a number of policy drivers which, while they may become popular in education policy, do not necessarily lead to enhanced education opportunities for the poor. I will list a few which have become fashionable in education policy thinking:

- The decentralising of education services is often seen as key to education development. Yet, as I have consistently argued, this debate is unproductive and there is not enough robust evidence which shows that decentralisation is policy-neutral in that it does not necessarily result in educational

improvement. The extent to which it can result in improving education quality depends on the motivation for its introduction and the form it takes.

- Spending more on education alone will improve education. There has been substantial research in this area which has shown no obvious correlation between resources and improving the quality of education. We should however be clear about the fact that when schools lack basic resources such as textbooks or toilet facilities then resources do matter. Beyond this, simple resource-only polices will not improve the quality of learning because, as discussed earlier, other factors (particularly the quality of teaching) are what matter.

- Increasing the availability of schooling and decreasing repetition and dropout improves learning. While these are important aspects to consider in processes of education planning, the simple reality is that enrolment is not the same as attendance and attendance does not imply learning.

- Primary and basic education is sufficient for poverty reduction. Higher levels of growth, enhanced innovative capacity and the utilisation and diffusion of new technologies all require a general increase in education levels. More importantly, inequities between the rich and the poor are more manifest and exacerbated at higher levels of education. These are some of the reasons why effective poverty reduction in and through education requires investment in all levels of education and not merely a narrow focus on primary and basic education.

Poverty reduction and education: Requirements for a comprehensive approach

Thus far, attention has been focused on a selection of key policies and strategies which seem to have an impact on learning, but because it is learning that we are concerned with, there are no 'magic' solutions for ensuring that education leads to poverty reduction. What is more important is finding the right mix of policies and strategies guided by the goal of determining the keys to unlock effective teaching and learning, which is at the heart of good quality learning.

While I have highlighted the importance of poverty reduction in and through education, it is important to note that poverty cannot be reduced solely

by education measures alone, important as they are. The reduction and eradication of poverty requires a national development strategy in which poverty is addressed at all levels; including in relation to the way the economy is managed, the provision of social services such as housing and health, and the extent and degree of political participation. Poverty elimination needs to be tackled on all fronts and this requires national policy coherence at all levels. Let me illustrate this point by giving a few examples. Without the poor being able to meet basic needs such as health and housing, poor households have to trade off education against other needs. Without an assertive political order which champions gender equality, girls and women will find it especially difficult to benefit from education. Without an economic framework which has the needs of the poor at its centre, impressive rates of growth will not automatically benefit the poor. In adopting a holistic approach, it is also important to note that, as mentioned earlier, the poor are not a homogenous group – the category of those classified as poor reflect and refract existing race, class and gender locations and other inequities in society. Thus, pro-poor inclusion policies need to be developed taking into account the differences in those classified as poor.

Up to this point I have implicitly spoken about the global situation. The Education for All (EFA) and MDG initiatives provide a global agenda in that they are globally-set targets and a key driver of the pro-poor agenda in global forces. These are obvious manifestations of how globalisation influences national education agendas. Globalisation, as many commentators have pointed out, is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it potentially opens up spaces for many nations in the area of trade. On the other hand, it leads to growing inequities between and within nation states. A glaring example is the fact that about 2% of adults in the world own more than half of the global household wealth. In contrast, the bottom half of the world's adult population owns barely 1% of global wealth. There is also a significant variation within countries in the concentration of wealth. The share of the top 10% of wealth ranges from around 40% in China to 70% in the USA (Bourguignon & Sundberg 2006).

Globalisation also limits the actions of nation states in pursuing their own national development strategies. Thus, for many poorer countries, their ability to act as sovereign states is constrained (severely in some cases) by global agendas and international aid. The challenge for nation states is to contest

the space of globalisation in ways that give primacy to national development strategies favouring the poor. The contours of globalisation, such as a narrow and reductionist view of education, will otherwise gain ascendancy.

While mindful of the constraints that nation states face in a global context, it is nonetheless important to assert the need for an active state. Poverty reduction and elimination is a matter of public-policy choice and intervention, and therefore not something which can be met by markets and charity, important as they may be. In a democratic society it is the state which has the mandate and legitimacy to enact public-policy interventions and choices in favour of the poor. This does not in any way imply that the state is a benign institution, nor is it free from contestation or influence. For the state to effectively intervene in public policy in favour of the poor requires an active and vigilant civil society that challenges and holds the state accountable. Deepening democracy entails extending and refreshing political mandates through voting as well as extending involvement of civil society. This is why there is a need for greater policy coherence to integrate different strategies and interventions initiated and implemented at state level. For instance, welfare grants provided by the social welfare department can be linked to increased education opportunities if they are conceived in a holistic manner (as they are in many countries). In Brazil, for example, grants are provided to families with working children to offset the need for child labour.

Conclusion

By way of concluding this chapter I shall briefly mention a few aspects for the effective implementation of education reforms which receive little attention in current thinking and analysis. First, it is important that there is a high degree of political commitment and will to eradicate poverty in and through education. Without commitment it is unlikely that there will be a strong focus on public-policy interventions in favour of the poor. Second, participation and active involvement in policy are critical to eradicating poverty. Poverty eradication and elimination is not something which is done to people – it is something that people who are poor need to be centrally involved in. Involvement is vital in ensuring that differences for the poor are explicitly recognised and acknowledged in policy planning. Third, strategies for eradicating poverty in and through education require unrelenting attention to improving inequality.

Quality education matters more for the poor than for any other group. An unrelenting focus on quality also entails more than quality-improvement projects. It underpins and influences all aspects of education systems. Fourth, quality teaching is at the heart of improving education for the poor. Fifth, no single reform on its own will enable the poor to benefit from education. What is required is holistic and comprehensive education planning that is integrated with other aspects of national development strategies at all levels of the education system. Finally, an active pro-poor state, a vigorous civil society and collective action to challenge global inequities are as much about education as they are about poverty.

Poverty reduction and elimination are ultimately conscious policy choices where the goal is to enlarge the opportunities people have to develop and lead valued lives. Poverty reduction is not a goal in itself – it is a moral, political, social and economic imperative to enlarge the freedoms of those whose freedoms are most limited and constrained. This is why this is a matter of concern for all, even those who already have the freedoms to live 'meaningful' lives. Without it, we can hardly lay claim to the creation of a just and human society.

Notes

1. The author has not reviewed the voluminous literature on poverty reduction strategies and how they have become central to the discourse of international aid policies.
2. Aid is now made conditional on developing poverty reduction strategies and sound, credible education-sector planning.
3. It is not possible in this chapter to address all the relevant aspects of these debates. For the purpose of this chapter, I have looked broadly at the main frameworks that have emerged in analysing the relationship between education and poverty development.
4. This chapter is not intended to provide a comprehensive review of the extant literature. This is a task beyond the scope of this chapter. For a succinct summary of some of the main debates see UNDP 2006.

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5 Education for poverty alleviation: Myth or reality?

Joe Teffo

The purpose of this chapter is to share ideas on poverty and approaches to its alleviation, especially through education. Consequently, this paper makes strong statements and tries to argue its case from the perspective of the poor. It argues for a liberatory education that is underscored by an African philosophy of education that will assist Africa in its quest for self-reliance and a flourishing future. The positions taken and arguments advanced are not necessarily new and may be found in the current development literature. In addition, the recommended strategies and solutions are not comprehensive and may just be one prespective. Other positions and arguments may be just as valid. Above all, the views expressed in this chapter are of an African philosopher, not an economist.

Aspects of poverty

Terms such as 'poverty eradication' and 'poverty alleviation' are often used interchangeably. Before discussing the causes, aspects, policies and approaches to either eradicating or alleviating poverty, it is important to distinguish what these terms imply. While absolute poverty can be eradicated, relative poverty can only be alleviated because what is minimally accepted today may vary over time, from rural to urban areas and from country to country. The aim, of course, should always be poverty eradication and not alleviation. Relative poverty also varies with levels of economic development, and with the perceptions and expectations of the majority in terms of what is considered minimally acceptable. For example, while clean and processed piped water may be a minimum acceptable standard of living in a city, it may not be a minimum requirement in a village. Similarly, while possessing a telephone may be a minimum necessity in a country such as the USA, it may not be a minimum requirement in India or South Africa. Likewise, while internet connections may not be a minimum necessity in these countries today,

they may become a minimum necessity in ten years (Cherian 2007). While addressing both absolute and relative poverty, this paper intends to focus on relative poverty because it is more prevalent in the cities of South Africa.

The poor experience poverty in real terms. They experience poverty in their everyday lives, lack the basic resources to meet their basic needs such as clothing and shelter, and, most importantly, have lost their self-esteem. As is commonly understood, poverty is not restricted to physical needs. It also results in inadequate social functioning. Left unabated, it can lead to national instability and insecurity. Essentially poverty has three closely interrelated aspects: poverty of money, poverty of access and poverty of power. These make the working, living and social environments of the poor extremely insecure and severely limit the options available to improve their lives. Without choices and security, breaking the cycle of poverty becomes virtually impossible and leads to the marginalisation and alienation of the poor from society (Cherian 2007).

Towards self-empowerment

While the issue of poverty has been the direct or indirect focus of development initiatives since the end of the colonial era (1940s to 1950s), it has gained prominence only in the last two to three decades. Two basic levels or types of poverty are identified in the development literature: absolute poverty and relative poverty. Simply put, absolute poverty is defined as the cost of the minimum necessities needed to sustain human life. At the time of writing, The World Bank regarded people earning less than US$1 a day (in 1993 purchasing power parity) as being absolutely poor. Relative poverty is defined as the minimum economic, social, political and cultural goods needed to maintain an acceptable way of life in a particular society. These are relative and contentious concepts and what I seek to provide is merely a working definition.

After several attempts, interventions and experiments, foreign aid to Africa has failed to ignite sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation. This could be due to mismanagement or sheer greed and corruption, which are endemic to the continent. For too many Africans, their quality of life is currently worse than it was 30 years ago. Rather than looking to outsiders for answers, the key to poverty alleviation in Africa is more likely to

come from local entrepreneurship underscored by philosophical negritude, Ujamaa (Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere's vision of socialism) and Black Consciousness. This is however often thwarted by government actions and multinational agencies such as the IMF that make it difficult, if not impossible, to start and grow the World Bank.

Entrepreneurship plays a vital role in economic development and self-reliance. Entrepreneurial activity creates wealth, increases in the GDP and quality of life. Therefore, entrepreneurship should be an integral part of our curricula from elementary school. This would go a long way towards alleviating the frustrations experienced by graduates who have degrees but cannot get employment. All government initiatives aimed at the acceleration of skills acquisition could also inform the development of a new curriculum. Therefore, an appropriate culture and work ethic should be infused through the schooling system rather than waiting for problems to manifest before seeking solutions. Creative and effective leadership and management are indispensable prerequisites for the success of education.

Transforming societies through education

Frantz Fanon has warned the African people before the dawn of independence in Africa that 'during the colonial period the people are called upon to fight against oppression; after national liberation, they are called upon to fight against poverty, illiteracy, and underdevelopment. The struggle, they say, goes on. The people realise that life is an unending contest' (Fanon 1963: 94). However, an observation of what is currently happening in South Africa makes one think that the 1994 national elections was a kind of a social contract in which the governed surrendered their liberty to the legislators for the purpose of development and nation building.

It seems that since the 'social contract' was signed through the ballot box, the state has responded to national calls only if they are expressed from within the ruling elite – not outside it and never against it. The national calls for the provision of HIV/AIDS drugs, criticism of the new educational curricula and the provision of housing are a few examples of national cries for empowerment. The voting exercise was the completion of one phase and at the same time the beginning of another phase of the struggle – the struggle for empowerment and development. During this phase, people should be the

agents of change as well as monitors and providers of the checks and balances for the delivery of services; while politicians should listen to them and act accordingly. As evidence has abundantly proven, struggling masses cannot be fooled by false promises.

It has always been an integral part of struggle ideology to transform societies through education. Perhaps even in the early days of the South African resistance movement people already knew Francis Bacon's dictum that knowledge is power. Truly, knowledge, no less than virtue, should be its own reward, and all without exception should aspire to it.

Pan-Africanist leaders in the early 1900s called for the eradication of the colonial education system. Whereas they were philosophically united in making and heeding the call, they did not, however, share a common vision of how to do it and most importantly what to replace it with. From all the calls, a common thread that could be detected was 'people's education for people's power'. If you cast a glance backwards you will notice that similar calls were made in South Africa in 1980s by the National Educational Policy Initiative (NEPI). Hence my contention that there is not much that is peculiar to South Africa in terms of educational policy innovations. South Africa's failures share some commonality with the rest of the continent. In this connection Seleti writes:

> A critical reappraisal of South Africa's experience in education vis-à-vis the rest of the continent does not conclude that it has been a miracle. Curriculum 2005 continues but under severe criticism and only falling short of declaring it a flop. The higher education reforms are yet to happen. So far institutions of higher learning have undertaken several restructuring exercises and there is a sense of fatigue setting in. Over the last nine years of post-apartheid South Africa, higher education appears to have experienced more of a mirage than a miracle. (2001: 2)

All nationalist leaders across generations have perceived education as an agent of transformation, development and social change. Good education, according to them, should do more than pass on the norms, values and knowledge necessary for a creative and conscientious citizen whose ethos is rooted in the changing African culture. The young are the reservoirs as well as the transmitters of culture, and those charged with nurturing them should be mindful that they would draw good dividends from them if they

show commitment and sacrifice in the course of their nurturing. It is in this context that Paolo Freire's banking concept of education should be revisited. Ajayi et al. also assert that 'the young are trained to acquire knowledge, skills and aptitudes necessary both for the preserving and defending of the basic institutions and values of society, as well as for adapting these to meet changing circumstances and challenges' (1992: 678).

As the continent seeks to regenerate itself, politicians, intellectuals and Africanist thinkers should take stock of what preceded their initiatives and, most importantly, what made them fail. Many African countries have quality education systems in place. What is lacking, however, is an enabling environment for teaching and learning due to intractable conflicts with an attendant economic collapse. Political stability and economic viability are therefore necessary conditions for transforming education into a vital agent for social transformation.

In South Africa the situation is more complex, but fairly similar to those in the rest of the continent. Whereas there is political stability and a robust economy, at least for now, the playing field is not yet level. In higher education discourse it is common to hear people mention the following in the context of government funding:

- Earmarked and redress funds.
- Increases in and distribution of government higher-education funds.
- Redistribution of government subsidies. (Cloete & Bunting 2000)

It is not sufficient to come up with elaborate curriculum changes while the educational philosophy underpinning the system smacks of the racial past, privileged versus underprivileged and resourced versus the under-resourced. One has to pause and take a critical look at the trafficking of children of the black elite to cities, and the lot of those who remain behind. Something profound is not being tackled, and there is little hope that those who should speak in favour of transforming schools will do so, since they are abandoning the townships and rural areas.

It is not the merits or otherwise of Curriculum 2005 or outcomes-based education that are being contested, but rather the philosophy that should imbue and guide education transformation in South Africa. It is not the size of the budget, but rather what the budget is being used for. It is not about the number of staff members, but rather about the quality, qualification and the

work ethic of those staff members. A cohesive force or spirit that drives this transformation, a force rooted in the African experience, is required. Until such time that this issue is addressed, we shall continue to flaunt our egos, pretending that South Africa is an exception to the rest of the continent.

The quest for a liberatory education

In all fairness to policy-makers, educationists and ideologues, a new paradigm in education began to evolve around 1994. However, the process has been disappointingly slow, primarily because of our historical past and ideological differences. The common thread that runs through all the debates is that education should seek to maximise human potential through facilitating lifelong learning towards a safe, sustained and prosperous South Africa for all. With regards to this, Slabbert writes:

> The human being created with incalculable potential already present by birth, is central to this paradigm This potential can only be maximised by the learners themselves through a process of lifelong learning when they are continually challenged with real life problems above their ability, which they have to solve themselves. Since no one can learn for or on behalf of the learner, this lifelong learning process can only be facilitated – something completely new to education! (Although some even claim that they know what it is). This new 'inside-out' paradigm (potential inside the learner has to come out) is the complete opposite of the old 'outside-in' paradigm (knowledge outside is imparted into the learner). (2001: 290–291)

The introduction of the Western system of education in colonial Africa was underpinned by two primary purposes: (1) vocational education aimed at serving the capitalist interest of producing skilled labourers to service industry, and (2) theoretical/academic education which produced graduates who did not and could not challenge the political status quo and white domination.

Religious conversion at the advent of colonialism created a class of converts who served as a buffer zone between the missionaries and the indigenous people. In many ways the converted facilitated the process of political domination and de-culturisation. There was, at the time, an uncritical assimilation of the doctrines and political ideologies which were not consistent with the cultures

in which they were located. It was Aristotle who averred that an uncritical or unexamined life is not worth living. It is true, therefore, that both education and religion at the time were intended to facilitate the colonisation enterprise, and so-called 'enlightened' Africans were used as pioneers or midwives of a new culture which they enthusiastically embraced and zealously advocated (Seleti 2001).

Recognising the efficacy of the Western system of education and Christian religions, and the attendant consequences of deculturalisation, alienation and subtle subjugation, the Africanist movement espoused the right of every African child to be taught, learn, read and write in his or her own language as well as in the language of the coloniser. A universal principle that all children up to the age of 16 were to receive free education was adopted by Africanist movements in 1945 (Seleti 2001). Effectively, the Africanist movement adopted and propagated the right of the African child to study as a central part of the nationalist struggle philosophy.

Under extreme oppression the quest for liberation manifested in a cadre of intellectuals who in their speeches and writing conscientised people about the significance of education, especially one rooted in their culture. But, as alluded to earlier, some intellectuals served to bolster the machinery that was oppressing the masses. They used their education to establish a stratum of the elite that perceived itself as different from the peasantry. Such a class is already emerging in South Africa. In this connection, Seiko Toure, the first president of Guinea Conackry, considered the 'political leader as a representative of culture', yet at the same time confessed that some Western-educated intellectuals were suffering from a moral, intellectual and cultural superiority complex towards their fellow colonised and that they required mental liberation to be effective in serving the people in the struggle against colonialism (Toure 1979: 601–616). It is thus clear that the emerging political elite and captains of industry in South Africa require 'mental liberation'.

After liberation from colonising powers, political leaders saw education as a vital instrument for development and mental decolonisation. Emphasis was placed on elementary education, improved secondary schools, teacher training colleges and the establishment of African universities (Seleti 2001). From 1960 to 1980 Africa experienced the most dynamic and phenomenal expansion in education. Most of the pioneers and torch-bearers were graduates from the University of Nairobi in Kenya, Makerere in Uganda and Fort Hare in South

Africa. In his opening address to the interim University Council of Ghana in 1961 Kwame Nkrumah declared:

> A very heavy responsibility is entrusted to you. The whole of Ghana depends to a very considerable extent on the success of our programme for higher education and research. It is necessary that we therefore go about the task of organising the university in the most resolute manner. (Seleti 2001)

All over Africa, the struggles for liberation were coupled with mental decolonisation and empowerment. So, as the nationalists were waging wars in the bush, intellectuals and academics were doing the same in the lecture halls and marketplaces. People realised that their liberation would be hollow and meaningless if there were no other members in society equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for the successful governance of their countries. Political prisoners therefore continued to study while they were incarcerated. The South African government however realised that it would not win in the struggle to perpetuate the status quo as long as prisoners were receiving education and the so-called privilege to study was retracted. It was only after some political wrangling and international pressure that the government succumbed and allowed prisoners to study again. Former South African president Nelson Mandela and Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe are, among others, prison graduates.

In 1652 the Dutch who had settled at the Cape introduced a European type of education. As South African Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd conceded centuries later, this type of education was, in broad terms, intended to produce semi-literate and semi-educated Africans that would best serve the interests of European settlers. For colonialism to succeed it needed Africans themselves to promote the system to their fellow Africans. In this endeavour there was commonality between secular and missionary schools. They all sought to proselytise the African into aspects of Western culture, such as history, medicine and religion. Europe was the point of reference in all such studies and the African existential experience was excluded from the educational landscape. Hence the African nationalists' contention that this type of education was essentially a strategy for deculturalisation, alienation and under-development. To this end South Africa developed an odious system called Bantu Education, which was introduced in 1954. Ironically, it

was the inception of this system that provided the irreversible impetus for the liberation of a black people in South Africa.

The initiatives of nationalist leaders were given further impetus by the resolutions of the Unesco Conference on the development of higher education in Africa held in Tananarive, Madagascar, in 1962. The liberations in many respects resembled and encapsulated the philosophy that was to guide Pan-Africanism and Black Consciousness in the future. African scholars easily won the support of political leaders when it came to the question of transforming education. Seiko Toure got to the heart of the matter when he declared, 'we must Africanise our education and get rid of the negative features of misconceptions inherited from an educational system designed to serve colonial purposes' (1979: 625).

Former president of Tanzania and illustrious pioneer of African education, Julius Nyerere, formulated a far-sighted philosophy of African education that he endeavoured to implement with a fair measure of success in 1971. Tanzania is arguably the only African country where an African language (Swahili) was used as a medium of instruction in education and as the primary language in business. Schooled in English in a Western education system, Nyerere realised that there could be no true liberation until people could express their own views and knowledge in their mother tongue. Politically, it was also necessary to articulate and advocate for an African identity and cultural reawakening through people's home language. Seeing language as a carrier and a mediator of culture, it became evident to Nyerere that African culture would remain underdeveloped unless a conscious decision was taken to teach and learn in indigenous languages (Namwera 1990).

The South African Constitution recognises 11 official languages, with sign language belatedly recognised as a twelfth. This constitutional principle of multilingualism exists only on paper. When the independence euphoria was at its peak, some African politicians in parliament tried to speak in their home languages. The mode of dress was also somewhat adjusted to appear more African. However, without being advised otherwise, those who ventured to be different finally opted for conformism. The reason for this is possibly that it is too taxing to be different, and perhaps (more significantly) because South Africans, blacks in particular, take their cue for life from the West rather than from Africa. The African Renaissance initiative would hence remain illusive

as long as the so-called 'power house' of Africa was mimicking the West and was prepared to 'de-culturise' itself in order to be acceptable to the West.

Though Nyerere's initiatives failed in some respects, much can be learnt from them – and their failures. For example, in his Education for Self-Reliance Policy, he stressed the role of education to achieve his goal of African socialism as outlined in the Arusha Declaration of 1967. Significant in this regard is the fact that while Nyerere comprehended and appreciated Karl Marx's idea of socialism, he simultaneously recognised that unadulterated Marxist socialism would not succeed in Africa. The system had to be adapted to African soil. This valuable lesson haunts us as we continuously falter with Eurocentric models and policies that are not amenable to our situation. By this reasoning, Nyerere could be declared one of the more pragmatic exponents of the African Renaissance in education.

In wrapping up this section, let me enumerate some thought patterns and positions that characterised education transformation discourse in Africa at the time. The following objectives are captured by Ajayi et al. in *Education and Social Change* (1999: 686):

- To integrate Western education into the life of the family and the community.
- To end the elitism of colonial education through a programme of universal primary education that will integrate Western and traditional systems of education.
- To bridge the gap between the educated elite and the masses through a better appreciation by the educated of the accumulated knowledge and wisdom that existed within traditional societies.
- To inculcate a spirit of work and service to the community in the process of education.

Recommendations

Education is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. It is a vehicle for bringing about changes in knowledge, values and behavioural patterns; thereby whetting the appetite for the search of eternal truths. Hence, it must be a priority to re-orient educational systems and curricula towards the aforesaid needs and, most importantly, the attainment of democracy, human dignity and peace. Effectively, education in the contemporary era must

provide learners with the skills, perspectives, values and knowledge to lead fruitful and enriching lives in their communities (Unesco 2002).

The Unesco position paper 'Enhancing Global Sustainability', prepared for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (third session), lists some of the following goals, which (if South Africa were to adopt them) would go a long way towards effectively transforming education on the road towards poverty alleviation. I have included some of my own recommendations that are informed by my own experience:

- To expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- To ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, living under difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to completely free and compulsory good quality primary education.
- To ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.
- To achieve a 50% improvement in the levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, as well as equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- To eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieve gender equality by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement of basic education of a good quality.
- To improve every aspect of the quality of education, and ensure excellence so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.
- To introduce technology-assisted education. Globalisation fundamentally affects societies, economies and cultures. It gives the poor exposure to and the hope of extricating themselves from the poverty-trap.
- Include in the curriculum Batho Pele ('People First') principles, religious education and the philosophy of Botho/Ubuntu which has at its heart the promises of the Freedom Charter. Shelter, water, sanitation, human dignity and equality of the human species were the Charter's key words and rallying ideological goals (Teffo 2006). Good character formation should start early and, where applicable, role models in society should be used as facilitators in order to nurture a culture of responsible citizenship. To this end, pilot schools could be selected and ring-fenced in order to test the

efficacy of the system. Lessons could also be learned from similar models from the East and West.

- Promote and support institutional capacity with respect to human resources development and culture change. These initiatives would yield better-equipped graduates that would help alleviate poverty in their respective communities. Skills training could also assist those who are outside of the formal educational set-up. Programmes such as Adult Basic Education and Training should be supported by all the tiers of government.

- In this digital age, access to information is vital for the purposes of wealth creation and poverty alleviation. The idea of multi-purpose centres and i-communities are most welcome. Such programmes and initiatives will greatly contribute to the empowerment of the poor and marginalised.

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SECTION 2:
Poverty in education
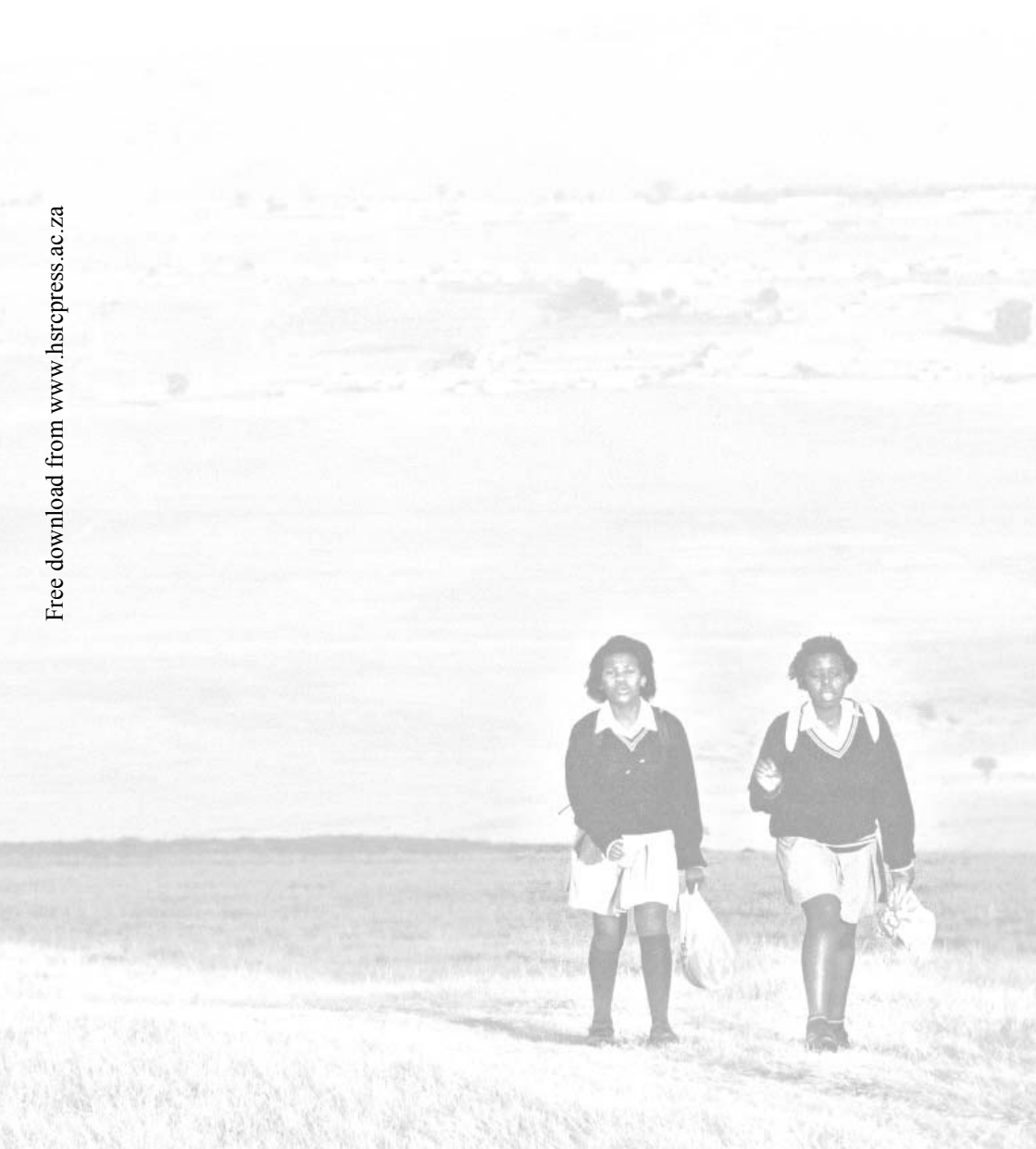
6 Student poverty in higher education: The impact of higher education dropout on poverty

Moeketsi Letseka and Mignonne Breier

Data on higher education (HE) trends in South Africa indicate that 50% of students enrolled in higher education institutions (HEIs) drop out in their first three years, with about 30% dropping out in their first year (see Table 6.3).[1] This is despite the fact that some of these students will have passed their Senior Certificate with endorsement, merit or distinction. Many students also come from poverty-stricken families and are indebted to the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and other education funding agencies which support their studies. The dropout phenomenon does therefore not bode well for efforts to break the vicious cycle of poverty and is the major cause of the unacceptably low throughput rates in the HE system.

This chapter draws on the HSRC's Student Pathways Study (2005), which examined student dropout in South Africa's HE system, focusing on seven HEIs in particular. The aim of this chapter is to share some of the key emergent trends identified in the Study. It presents the design of the Study and its background, showing that it arose out of concern about low graduation and success rates. The dropout phenomenon is discussed, both in general and in relation to the Study's preliminary findings, and the case of one of South Africa's three historically black universities is presented in detail. The chapter concludes with an examination of the extent of student poverty and the necessity to assess academic underperformance in this context.

The Student Pathways Study

The Student Pathways Study focused on the following seven HEIs: University of Fort Hare, University of the North (now Limpopo), Pretoria Technikon (now part of Tshwane University of Technology), Peninsula Technikon (now

part of Cape Peninsula University of Technology), University of Stellenbosch, University of the Western Cape and University of the Witwatersrand.

Questionnaires were sent to all students from these institutions who were in three- and four-year programmes in 2000 and graduated or left without completing a qualification in 2002. Their fields of study were: business, commerce and management (BCM), education (ED), human and social sciences (HSS), and science engineering technology (SET).

The Study targeted 20 353 'leavers' and 14 195 graduates (a total of 34 548 students) and had an overall response rate of 16%. It also included:

- The collation and analysis of enrolment and graduation figures for all South African HEIs, as supplied by the DoE's Higher Education Management Information System (Hemis).
- Semi-structured interviews with senior members of university management as well as senior members of academic staff at all seven institutions. These included the academic registrar, directors of institutional planning, deans of BCM, SET, education and humanities, and academic development staff and alumnus.
- Data derived from official institutional reports such as three-year rolling plans, strategic plans, annual reports, alumnus reports, academic development strategies, student induction programmes, faculty brochures and programme development reports.

Background to the study

The Student Pathways Study was conceived in response to concerns that South Africa's HE throughput rates were too low (Cloete & Bunting 2000; DoE 1997; DoE 2001b; Meintjies 2000[2]). The National Plan for Higher Education expressed concern that, at 15%, South Africa's 'graduation rate'[3], was one of the lowest in the world (DoE 2001b). The DoE argued that:

> The analyses of enrolment trends and graduation rates suggest that the higher education system is not meeting the human resource needs of South Africa. The decline in enrolments coupled with inefficiencies in graduation rates are cause for concern, given the shifts that have occurred in employment distribution as well as the shortages of high-level skills in

> the labour market. This is likely to be a major impediment in achieving the economic development goals of the government. (2001b: 18)

Furthermore, the DoE (2001b) noted that there were wide disparities in the graduation rates of black and white students, and that evidence suggested that the average graduation rate for white students tended to be more than double that of black students. At some institutions the graduation rate ranged from 6% to 24% and the DoE (2002b) projected that, in order to achieve equity in the system, a graduation rate of 30% had to be achieved by 2012. In order to achieve such a rate, there needed to be increases in the participation, success and graduation rates of black students in general and African students in particular; as well as increases in the representation of blacks and women in academic and administrative positions, especially at senior levels.

The National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) (DoE 2001b) also set target graduation rates that distinguished between contact and distance programmes and different types of qualifications. For example, it set a target graduation rate of 25% for three-year undergraduate programmes through contact delivery and a 15% target for the same type of programme through distance education. The NPHE noted that few institutions met the proposed benchmarks. If they did, the HE system would be producing about 40 000 more graduates than they were at the time (DoE 2001b). The rates have since been found to be unrealistically high and have been reduced (DoE 2004b). The following table sets out both the old and new target rates.

Table 6.1: NPHE benchmarks for graduation rates (2001 and 2004)

Qualification type	Graduation rate (contact)		Graduation rate (distance)	
	NPHE 2001	Adjusted 2004	NPHE 2001	Adjusted 2004
Up to three years undergraduate	25%	22.5%	15%	13.5%
Four-year or more undergraduate	20%	18%	10%	9%
Postgraduate up to honours	60%	54%	30%	27%
Masters	33%	30%	25%	22.5%
Doctoral	20%	[Not specified]	20%	[Not specified]

Source: DoE (2001b; 2004b)

Although the DoE has lowered its target graduation rates, improved throughput remains a priority, to the extent that the new funding framework links funding to the number of graduates an institution produces. (For a discussion of its implications, see Breier and Mabizela 2008.)

Success rates

Another way to assess student progress is to calculate success rates. These rates take into account full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrolments rather than headcount enrolments.[4] When this data is disaggregated by race, blacks and coloureds are the worst affected. *Education Statistics in South Africa at a Glance*, the DoE's annual statistical report of educational trends, reports undergraduate success rates by race for the period 2001–2004 as follows: success rates of white undergraduates averaged 84%, those of Indians averaged 80%, those of coloureds averaged 74% and blacks averaged 69% (see Table 6.2 below).

Table 6.2: Undergraduate success rates of contact students in public HE institutions, by race (2001–2004)

Year	African	Coloured	Indian	White	Average
2001	65	75	78	85	76
2002	70	74	81	86	76
2003	70	71	80	85	77
2004	70	75	79	84	77

Source: Developed by authors using data from Education Statistics in South Africa at a Glance (2001a; 2002a; 2003; 2004a)

What should be of major concern to all HE role-players is that 13 years after the dawn of democracy and the promise of equitable delivery of social justice to all, blacks and coloureds (population groups who were previously disadvantaged and bore the brunt of exclusion by apartheid education policies and legislation) continue to lag behind in education success rates, which are the building blocks of human capital. The performance of these population categories (that of black students, in particular) is way below the national average. This is contrary to the performance of whites and Indians, who are way above the national average (see Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: HE undergraduate success rates by race (2000–2003)
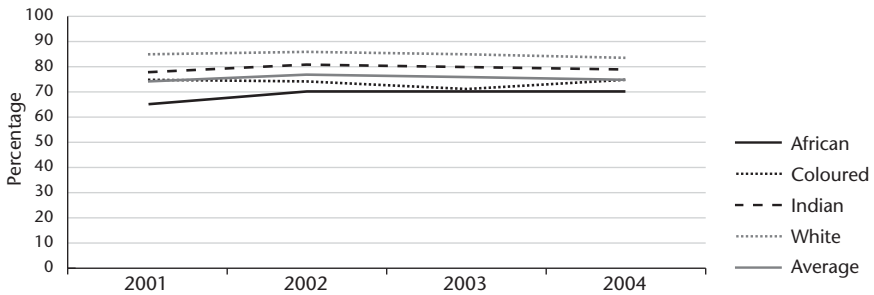
Source: Makuwa & Marimba (2006)

The historical legacy

The dynamics outlined above cannot be understood in isolation. As Qunta (2007)[5] points out, they should be seen as part of the larger historical legacy of South Africa, a legacy that is marked by centuries of white settler occupation and colonisation, first by the Dutch in the 17th century and then the British from 1806 onwards. Domination, hegemony, institutionalised racial segregation and entrenched marginalisation of blacks were all aimed at securing land and labour to drive the largely agricultural and industrial economy. Qunta cites a battery of legislation from 1893 to 1951 which ensured that blacks were transformed from being 'self-sufficient subsistence farmers and livestock owners, to being farm and mine labourers'.

Letseka (1997) shows that in 1993, just a year before South Africa's transition to democracy, provision of educational funding was racially skewed and unequal. The apartheid regime allocated R4 504 (per year) for the education of a white pupil, R3 625 per Indian pupil, R2 855 per coloured pupil, and only R1 532 per black pupil (three times less than the allocation per white pupil). This unequal provision was not unusual. It was a manifestation of centuries of white settler domination and control, the aim of which was to centre resources and privilege in white families while disempowering black families by keeping them in the margins of socio-economic privilege. As Fiske and Ladd (2004) argue, there is no doubt that repetition and dropout rates among black students are high and matriculation pass rates low as a result of apartheid policies and

legislation. Their contention is that an adequate measure of equity need not require that whites and blacks exhibit similar outcomes. What it does require is that outcomes for black students be raised to a minimum threshold that will equip them to function as workers and citizens in the new democratic era.

Some might argue that since 1994 there has been increased migration of the affluent black middle classes from previously disadvantaged black townships to previously privileged whites-only suburban residential areas, and that their children are now beneficiaries of the privileged former white schools. There is certainly merit in this argument, but the black middle classes constitute a small component of the total black population – the majority of whom are trapped in the squalor and abject poverty that continues to pervade most black townships and rural villages. It is also worth noting that the vast majority of black parents and guardians are poorly educated and, in the worst cases, not educated at all, rendering them unemployable. Stories of underprivileged pupils who live in shacks with no running water or electricity and go to school on empty stomachs (Forde 2007[6]), or have to walk 12 km to school every morning and 12 km back every afternoon because their parents/guardians cannot afford to pay for transport (Maphumulo 2007[7]), are too familiar.

The dropout rate

The DoE's (DoE 2005) Directorate on Higher Education Planning reported that of the 120 000 students who enrolled in HE in 2000, 36 000 (or 30%) dropped out in their first year of study. A further 24 000 (20%) dropped out during their second and third years of study. Of the remaining 60 000 (50%), less than half (22%) graduated within the specified three-year duration for a generic bachelors degree (see Table 6.3 and Figure 6.2). Subsequently, the DoE issued a public statement lamenting that the dropout rate was costing the treasury R4.5 billion in grants and subsidies to HE institutions without a commensurate return on investment (ROI). It has since emerged that at some institutions the dropout rate is as high as 80%. Macfarlane (2006)[8] argues that even when the movement of students between institutions is taken into account, it is evident that close to 50% of undergraduates drop out. About one in three university students and one in two technikon students dropped out between 2000 and 2004. Necessarily, this dropout rate raises serious questions about the sector's ability to generate a viable throughput rate.

Table 6.3: HE undergraduate dropout rates (2000–2003)

	Progress of 2000 cohort of undergraduates		
	Universities (%)	Technikons (%)	Total (%)
Dropped out at the end of 2000	25	34	30
Dropped out at the end of 2001	9	13	11
Dropped out at the end of 2002	7	11	9
Total dropped out 2000–2002	41	58	50
Graduated in 2002 or 2003	26	19	22
Studying in 20003, but not completing	33	22	28
Total numbers in cohort	59 000	61 000	120 000

Source: DoE (2005)

Figure 6.2: South Africa's dropout rate (2000–2003)

● 50% – Dropped out in 2000–2003
● 28% – Studying in 2003 but not completing
○ 22% – Graduated in 2002–2003
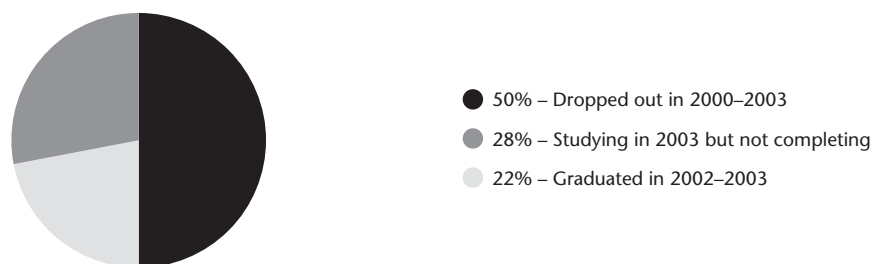
Source: DoE (2005)

Socio-economic status

The Student Pathways Study used four key variables to analyse socio-economic status:

- Education level of the father / male guardian.
- Education level of the mother / female guardian.
- Income level of the father / male guardian.
- Income level of the mother / female guardian.

The study showed that, on average, 70% of the families of the surveyed higher-education leavers (dropouts) were in the category 'low economic status'. Black families were particularly poor (with parents and guardians earning as little as R1 600 or less a month in some cases) and the majority of black parents fell into the categories 'no formal education' and 'some secondary education'. Yet many of the students coming from these families depended on their parents or guardians for financial support to pay their fees and/or supplement what they got from NSFAS in order to provide for essential living expenses. Many of the leavers indicated that they engaged in full-time, part-time or odd jobs to augment their meagre financial resources, no doubt adding to their stress levels and distracting them from their studies.

Poverty and dropout have also been identified as a critical factor among grade 12 learners in another HSRC study. Cosser and du Toit's (2002) survey of 12 204 grade 12 learners demonstrated that 78% of all the surveyed learners in general, and 85% of African learners in particular, come from families of low socio-economic status backgrounds. What this means is that the parents/guardians of the surveyed grade 12 learners have less than a Senior Certificate qualification and are only able to command a monthly household income of R3 000 or less.

An institutional case study

This section of the chapter deals with the case study of one of the three historically black universities in the Student Pathways Study. For the purposes of this chapter we will call this institution University A. The research at this university shows that many students leave before completing their degrees because they cannot afford to stay. Impoverished families are being called

upon to top up loans and bursary funding or students have to find work. Many leave to do so and intend to return when they can.

Questionnaires were posted to 1 327 individuals from University A who passed their degrees or diplomas in 2002, and 1 825 who left in 2002 without obtaining a qualification. A total of 246 graduates and 257 leavers responded, making response rates of 14% and 19%, respectively. They had the following profile:

The leaver respondents were:
- 47% black, 47% coloured, 4% Indian, 1% white and 1% unknown race.
- 55% female.
- 54% in 'other humanities', 24% in combination programmes, 8% in science, 7% in education and 7% in BCM.

The graduate respondents were:
- 54% black, 38% coloured, 7% Indian, 2% white and 1% of unknown race.
- 62% female.
- 32% in 'other humanities', 24% in education, 18% in combination programmes, 17% in science and 9% in BCM.

Presented with a range of factors which might have contributed to their leaving the university and asked to rate these from 1 ('not at all') to 5 ('to a very large extent'), respondents gave the highest value by far to 'I did not have funds to pay for my studies'. This achieved a mean score of 3.8 and was rated highest by Africans. Coloureds also indicated they could not afford to pay for their studies, but of all the groups suggested most strongly that they planned to return later. Indians cited academic reasons for leaving most highly and whites mostly cited the way the university administration dealt with students.

By gender, the top five reasons for males leaving were no funds (3.6), failing courses (2.5), very active social life (2.5), frustration with the administration (2.4), and the need to 'stop out' (2.4) ('stopping out' refers to needing to pause one's studies for a while, often to earn money). The top reasons for females were: no funds (3.9), need to 'stop out' (3.1), frustration with the administration (2.8), 'I had little self confidence' (2.4), 'I battled to learn all the new terminology and think in my chosen field of study' (2.4), and 'I had no induction programme which made it difficult for me to cope from the beginning' (2.4).

Table 6.4: Factors that contributed to leaving University A in 2002, by order of importance

Factor	Aggregated mean score	Scores by race
I did not have the funds to pay for my studies	3.8	Africans 3.9 Coloureds 3.7 Indians 2.7 Whites 2.5
I was failing some or all of my courses and realised I was unlikely to pass at the end of the year	2.8	Indians 3.7 Africans 2.8 Coloureds 2.7 Whites 1.5
I could not afford to spend three or four years on continuous study, so I left, planning to return to my studies at a later point	2.7	Coloureds 3.1 Indians 2.7 Africans 2.5 Whites 2.5
I was frustrated by the way the institution's administration dealt with students	2.6	Whites 3.0 Indians 3.0 Coloureds 2.7 Africans 2.5
I lost interest in the programme I was studying	2.4	Indians 3.3 Africans 2.4 Coloureds 2.2 Whites 2.0

After three years, 126 (49%) of the 257 leavers were employed. Whites were most likely to be employed and Africans least likely – after three years 100% of the white leavers, 75% of the Indian, 60% of the coloured and only 42% of the black leavers had found jobs. Male leavers were also more likely to find jobs than female leavers – 51% compared with 47%. The graduates achieved a much higher employment rate than the leavers – after three years 197 of the 246 graduates had found jobs (translating into employment rates of 80% for both men and women). The employment rate for black graduates was almost 75% higher than for black leavers and coloured graduates had a 50% higher employment rate than coloured leavers. Whites still had the highest employment rates (100%), but coloureds achieved 93% and blacks 72%. Only Indians were less likely to be employed after three years if they were graduates as opposed to leavers (71% compared with 75%).

Graduating also had significant financial benefits for the individuals concerned. Asked how much they earned per month before deductions, 129 leavers responded. Of these, 6 (5%) said they were working for no pay, 78 (60%) were earning less than R3 200, 28 (22%) were earning between R3 201 and R6 400, 15 (12%) were earning between R6 401 and R12 800, and 2 (2%) were earning between R12 801 and R25 600. None were earning above R25 600. Of the 197 graduates who responded to this question, 2 (1%) were working for no pay, 30 (15%) were earning R3 200 or below, 62 (31%) between R3 201 and R6 400, 84 (43%) between R6 401 and R12 800, 9 (5%) were earning between R12 801 and R25 600, and 10 (5%) above R25 600.

Table 6.5: Comparisons of leaver and graduate salaries

Salary per month before deductions	Leavers	Percentage	Graduates	Percentage
No pay	6	5	2	1
R3 200 or less	78	60	30	15
R3 201 to R6 400	28	22	62	31
R6 401 to R12 800	15	12	84	43
R12 801 to R25 600	2	2	9	5
Above R25 600	0	0	10	5
Total	129	102	197	100

In the survey as a whole, 70% of respondents who left before completing their qualification came from poor socio-economic backgrounds. University A's ratio, at 79%, was much higher and second only to Fort Hare (82%). Significantly, many of University A's graduate respondents also came from impoverished backgrounds. Indeed its proportion of graduates who could be categorised as being of low socio-economic status, at 75%, was the highest in the study. The average across all seven institutions was 56%.

The following is a detailed analysis of socio-economic background. The statistics show little difference between the education levels of the parents of leavers and graduates. Only 13% of fathers and 10% of mothers of leavers had a tertiary education, compared with 15% and 13% of graduate respondents. In both groups, 15% of fathers and 13% of mothers had no education.

Table 6.6: Education level of respondents' parents/guardians

| | Father / male guardian | | | | Mother / female guardian | | | |
| | Leavers | | Graduates | | Leavers | | Graduates | |
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No formal education	31	15	33	15	33	13	32	13
Grade 7 or less	50	24	61	28	72	29	73	30
Some secondary	45	22	43	20	79	31	69	29
Matric	27	13	29	13	27	11	24	10
Technical college	7	3	8	4	9	4	12	5
Tertiary	26	13	29	13	25	10	27	11
Don't know	20	10	15	7	7	3	5	2
Total	206	100	218	100	252	100	242	100

While one might think that graduates would come from a more financially secure background, employment details for parents and guardians showed the graduates had an even higher proportion of parents/guardians who were retired or on pension, the same proportion of fathers who were unemployed and only slightly lower proportion of mothers (22% compared with 25%). The biggest discrepancy between leavers and graduates was on the options 'working for company, organisation or someone else' (formal employment) – 9% more leavers' fathers were employed in this way (44% compared with 35%) and 5% more leavers' mothers (28% compared with 23%). There was also a greater proportion of leaver respondents who did not know their fathers' employment status (9% vs 4%).

Analysis of responses on questions about parental income also showed the graduates had little advantage over the leavers. In both groups a high proportion of fathers (13% for leavers and 11% for graduates) and an even higher proportion of mothers (24% and 28%, respectively) had no income.

Table 6.7: Employment status of respondents' parents/guardians

| | Father / male guardian | | | | Mother / female guardian | | | |
| | Leavers | | Graduates | | Leavers | | Graduates | |
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Formal employment	75	44	58	35	67	28	49	23
Self-employed	18	10	21	13	15	6	18	8
Unemployed	14	8	12	8	59	25	48	23
Domestic worker/ gardener	0	0	3	2	35	15	13	6
Informal sector (vendor/hawker)	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	1
Subsistence farmer	1	0	2	1	1	0	2	1
Retired / on pension	49	28	61	37	53	23	77	36
Don't know	15	9	7	4	4	2	4	2
Total	172	100	166	100	235	100	213	100

Table 6.8: Income of respondents' parents/guardians

| Monthly income | Father / male guardian | | | | Mother / female guardian | | | |
| | Leavers | | Graduates | | Leavers | | Graduates | |
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No income	21	13	17	11	55	24	59	28
Under R3 200	67	41	62	39	121	53	93	44
R3 201 to R6 400	22	13	21	13	15	6	22	10
R6 401 to R12 800	9	5	16	10	8	3	13	6
R12 801 and above	5	3	10	6	2	1	2	1
Don't know	40	24	32	20	28	12	23	11
Total	164	100	158	100	229	100	212	100

An analysis of responses on questions about parental income also showed the graduates had little advantage over the leavers. In both groups a high proportion of fathers (13% for leavers and 11% for graduates) and an even higher proportion of mothers (24% and 28%, respectively) had no income. In both groups, the greatest proportion was earning under R3 200 – 41% of leavers' fathers and 39% of graduates'; and 53% and 45% for leavers' and graduates'

mothers, respectively. High proportions of respondents (particularly leavers) did not know their fathers' incomes – one-quarter of leaver respondents compared with one-fifth of graduates. This finding, combined with the high proportion of leavers who did not know their fathers' type of employment, indicates a possible absence of a father figure in the homes of the leavers.

Why did some students graduate while others did not?

Given that the graduates came from similarly impoverished backgrounds, the question of why some completed their studies when others did not is an important one. An analysis of responses to questions about sources of income for fees and living expenses shows that graduates were less reliant on parents/guardians for financial support. (Only a quarter of graduates said they received support from their parents/guardians, compared with 42% of leavers.) Instead, a higher proportion of graduates had funding from the NSFAS (26% compared with 21% of the leavers) and/or bursaries (25% compared with 8% of the leavers).

Table 6.9: Source of income for fees (leavers and graduates)

	Leavers		Graduates	
	No.	%	No.	%
NSFAS	67	21	26	26
Parents/guardians	133	42	25	25
Bank loan	8	3	3	3
Bursary	27	8	25	25
Scholarship	6	2	3	3
Other	78	24	–	17
Total	319	100	82	100

Graduates were also less reliant on parents and guardians for living expenses (36% compared with 50%). Interestingly, they were also more likely to have jobs. Of the students surveyed, 18% of graduates compared with 9% of leavers had full-time jobs while studying, 20% compared with 14% had part-time jobs, and 9% compared with 6% had odd jobs.

Table 6.10: Financial support for living expenses (leavers and graduates)

Source of income	Leavers		Graduates	
	No.	%	No.	%
Parents/guardians	155	50	111	36
The money I received for my studies covered by my living expenses	24	8	21	7
Friends/relatives other than parents/guardians	9	3	11	4
Odd jobs	19	6	27	9
Part-time job	43	14	62	20
Full-time job	28	9	56	18
Other	29	9	23	7
Total	307	100	311	100

Another significant difference between the leavers and the graduates lay in whether or not they had a matric qualification (Senior Certificate) with exemption. Results showed that a higher proportion of graduates had attained exemptions (62% compared with 39% of leavers). This confirmed what academics at University A had stated in interviews: that matric exemption was a good indicator of future success (second only to a matric received overseas). Furthermore, leavers showed higher failure rates in the three Senior Certificate subjects which are regarded as important indicators of potential for HE study (english, mathematics and physical science) and fewer were English speaking. Academics and administrators who were interviewed also pointed to less tangible differences. Some students were just as impoverished as others, they said, but had been brought up in such a way that they were more motivated, resilient and focused.

'Stop out' rather than 'drop out'

During interviews at University A, some academics argued for a reconceptua-lisation of 'drop out' to recognise favourably those who are forced to 'stop out' for a while (mostly to earn money), but intend to return. The importance of this trend was confirmed in our research.

About 100 leaver respondents indicated they had re-registered for further study since leaving in 2002 – about two-thirds for a diploma or certificate and one-third for a degree. This was inversely proportionate to their registration at time of departure, in which two-thirds had been registered for degrees and one-third for diplomas. The suggestion is that students 'downscale' their academic ambitions after leaving. Whether this is for academic or financial reasons (the lower qualifications take less time) is not clear. It is one of the questions that will be pursued further in qualitative research as an off-shoot of this study.

The views of academics and administrators at University A

All the interviewees at University A cited poverty as a major reason why students leave prematurely. For some it was the biggest reason. Administrators pointed out that although many students receive NSFAS funding, a number of factors make it insufficient to cover all their needs. Firstly, although NSFAS allocations are announced at the end of the preceding year, the first tranche to institutions is only released on 1 April, which is the beginning of the government's fiscal year. Many institutions, particularly the historically black universities, experience cash-flow problems in the first quarter of the year and consequently demand payment upfront (DoE 2005). At University A, non-resident students are required to pay R3 000 upfont at registration and resident students pay R3 500, which equates to a large proportion of their parents'/guardians' monthly income (see Table 6.8).

Staff in the financial aid office also reported that this payment caused a great deal of distress for some students. Although there was a (NSFAS-defined) means test to establish whether a student qualified for NSFAS funding, there was no test to determine whether a student had the means to pay the upfront amount. Some students did not even have the money to pay the R580 portion of this amount for registration.

A dean at University A quoted examples of excellent matriculants who would not have been able to attend the university and others who were already students and had passed all their courses that would not have been able to return had he not been able to obtain for them the R580 fee, through pleading their case to the financial aid office.

The second major concern is the amount of the loan/bursary itself. Because the demand for financial aid is far greater than the supply, institutions tend to give students less than the full amount required so that they can spread the support as far as possible. Currently the 90 000-odd students who receive NSFAS aid nationally are funded at 75% to 80% of the amount determined by the means test (DoE 2005). At University A, even the fullest loan/bursary is unlikely to cover more than accommodation and food. The extras a student needs (such as toiletries and transport fees) must come from alternative sources of income. A senior manager at University A mentioned two major reasons for dropout – 'under-preparedness' and the anxiety experienced by students who were struggling to sustain themselves from one month to the next.

Several interviewees spoke of students who were so poor they often went hungry. One said that because of the stigma associated with 'food insecurity' they often tried to conceal this fact. Students who wished to be supportive had to be careful not to offend the dignity of the hungry person when offering to share their food. It was easier for poor students to ask to share other items (toiletries, for example) than to admit they had no food.

Conclusion

The vicious cycle of financial disadvantage and academic under-performance which originated under apartheid still prevails at some of South Africa's HEIs. Preliminary findings from the Student Pathways Study show that many of the students who leave their institutions prematurely do so because they cannot afford to stay and, in general, student academic underperformance and dropout should not be seen in isolation from access to personal and parental financial resources.

On the other hand, the case of one university shows that many of the graduates in the survey came from impoverished backgrounds; although their matric results showed they were better prepared for university study (suggesting a purely academic reason for their achievements). The study found that these students were less reliant on their parents for income than the leavers and often had jobs of their own. Further qualitative study is now required to draw more explicit conclusions.

Notes

1. Percentages have been rounded off throughout this chapter, therefore totals might not add up to exactly 100%.
2. Meintjies F, Higher education registers a fail mark overall, Sunday Times, 6 August 2000.
3. In the absence of cohort studies tracing a group of students from their first year of study to graduation, which would provide an accurate picture of the throughput rate, graduation rate remains a proxy for throughput. It is arrived at by calculating the percentage of graduates over headcount enrolments for any particular year.
4. FTEs are calculated (a) by assigning to each course a fraction representing the weighting it has in the curriculum of a qualification and (b) by multiplying the headcount enrolment of that course by this fraction. Success rates are determined by (a) calculating FTE-enrolled student totals for each category of courses, (b) calculating FTE degree/diploma credits for each course category using the same credit values, and (c) calculating the percentage of FTE credits in relation to FTE enrolments (therefore: FTE enrolments divided by FTE credits multiplied by 100 = success rate percentage). The benchmark for success rates is not clear, with estimates ranging from 75% to 80% for contact postgraduate and undergraduate combined (DoE 2005: 37–38; Subotzky 2003: 378).
5. Qunta C, Affirmative action not to blame, our racial past is, *Pretoria News*, 14 March 2007.
6. Forde F, It's all a question of class, *The Star*, 10 March 2007.
7. Maphumulo S, Brothers' long walk to education, *The Star*, 13 March 2007.
8. Macfarlane D, Shock varsity dropout stats, *Mail & Guardian*, 22–28 September 2006.

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7 Breaking the shackles of poverty through education enhancing programmes: A glimmer of optimism in the School Nutrition Programme

Zama Kiti

In his argument for investing in the young, Heckman (2000) advocates for decisive and proactive intervention by the state and society on programmes that promote educational development. Engle et al. (2007) posit that health and education are intertwined and one cannot be considered without the other. For these scholars, therefore, focusing and investing in advanced education programmes may have no significant impact where poverty is rife. It is generally agreed that absolute poverty is the greatest challenge affecting developing countries. Most developing countries, and 80% of the people in the South[1], live below the poverty threshold (that is, they live on less than US$1 a day) (Elliot 2006; Engle et al. 2007; Heckman 2000). According to Heckman (2000), Engle et al. (2007) and others, this implies that this 80% will have stifled educational development.

Jolly (2007) argues that early childhood development is a very critical global challenge, and one of the factors that impacts negatively on the challenge is malnutrition. This contention clearly links education to a particular socio-economic status. It insinuates that educated people are catered for in the labour market because they have skills and, as such, they occupy a better position in society. Development, it is argued, can only be successful if it is driven by education. This is especially true in the developing world. Development not driven by education in the developing countries, they argue, cannot be sustainable. It is in the context of these key arguments that the South African school nutrition programme (SNP) was conceptualised in September 1994 (Tomlinson 2007). Added to this, the SNP was also intended to provide a thrust for attaining both the Dakar Goals and the MDGs, which aim to eradicate poverty by the year 2015 (SA Gov 2007).

After the advent of democracy in 1994, the South African government under the leadership of the ANC sought to redress the imbalances of the apartheid era. These actions were not only informed by election rhetoric, but were also mandatory in the institutional framework of post-apartheid South Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 106 of 1996, bestows upon all South African citizens the right to education and food. The SNP was founded on this principle.

This chapter posits that even though the debates that have become pertinent in the discourse of surrounding the SNP is contentious and insightful, they should not occlude the pervasive social and economic conditions salient in the developing world. Whilst these debates have largely been centred on the core objectives for instituting the SNP, this chapter seeks to demonstrate through its findings that the focus should now be directed at formulating policies and strategies that will sustain the SNP because of the insurmountable benefits it has in poor countries. One school of thought views the SNP as part of a broader, integrative strategy through which poverty alleviation can be achieved. The author leans towards this view, but also concedes that evidence from the study indicates that the programme is neither integrative nor well co-ordinated.

SNPs are seen by some scholars as a strategy that should purely benefit school children by alleviating hunger and simultaneously enhancing learners' intellectual capacity. In many studies SNPs, and especially the Primary School Nutrition Programmes (PSNPs), have yielded rich informative and mostly positive data on their impact in the classroom. Notwithstanding these perspectives, in a number of instances globally the programmes have led to increased volumes of learners, longer attention spans and improved performance in school work. The purpose of this chapter is, therefore, to explore the possibilities of collaborative data on the effect the programme has had on schools in KwaZulu-Natal and offer explanations for this scenario in order to dissuade negative debate about the benefits of the programme.

Rationale

Cloete et al. (2006) contend that there is a need to focus on assessing the impact of the SNP programme, which seeks to address real-world conditions. It is a contention of this chapter that poverty and, by implication, hunger,

is a real-world condition; and, more specifically, a real 'third-world' or developing-world condition. South Africa cannot be described as a developed country, despite the debate on its dual economy status. Since, according to neo-liberal and other classical economy perspectives, South Africa is classified as a developing country, it stands to reason that it is characterised by pervasive poverty. Hunger is inextricably linked to poverty. If such social pathologies (poverty, in this instance) are to be eradicated, drastic strategic interventions have to be institutionalised. The decision-making process surrounding sustaining, maintaining or aborting these interventions requires intensive and objective information.

The SNP was introduced as a strategic intervention for addressing problems associated with poverty. There is general agreement that the efficacy of the SNP has not been adequately researched. This paper does not seek to generalise about the efficacy of this feeding scheme as a whole, but merely intends to point out that caution has to be exercised when evaluating its impact on the broader lives of learners. Whilst there have been unsuccessful feeding projects operating in some schools, there are cases that point to positive impacts of the programme despite the challenges that are encountered. These challenges point to areas that require strategic intervention.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate that it is not merely the availability of food that counts, but also the type of food, the manner in which it is prepared, and the commitment and value the teaching staff and all stakeholders place on the nutrition programme. There are, for instance, schools that have purportedly been operating feeding programmes for a number of years but have not experienced any noticeable benefit. On the other hand, there are those that are purportedly observing improvements in various spheres, as will be outlined below. This chapter argues that hunger is indeed a motivating factor that leads to the other benefits of the SNPs. It also seeks to argue for the programme to be viewed as an integral part of the broader national socio-economic developmental agenda.

Because it is not the purpose of this chapter to establish the link between SNPs and the state's socio-economic developmental benefits, the author will not draw any links between the impact of the SNPs and the development agenda of the country. It is not within the scope of this chapter to discuss developmental implications of SNPs. A study of the impact of this strategy on (developmental) benefits should take the prospective longitudinal research

design that would have followed the participants from the day it was adopted and institutionalised to present. Cloete et al. (2006) maintain that programme assessment or evaluation has the inherent benefit of assessing the factors that contribute to project impact, and thus help the planner to improve project design. It is hence the anticipation of this chapter that it will not only lead to maintenance of the SNP programme, but also lead to innovative, pragmatic and more integrated and objective strategies that will help sustain it.

The objectives of this chapter are as follows:
- To determine the impact of SNPs in education in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To establish factors contributing to this impact.
- To establish the strengths of the model used in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To establish challenges of the SNPs in KwaZulu-Natal.

Literature review

Poverty

Idasa (2007) contends that amid the plenty that characterises South African economic growth is the persistent and salient poverty that defines the rest of the population. The picture painted by South African economic growth is one of a patterned systematic outlook. Whilst the country is closer to its targeted 6% economic growth per annum at 4.5%, it remains characterised by the two economies that define its metropolis and satellite areas. It is argued that there is an unprecedented widening of the economic gap intra-racially, even though it is closing inter-racially. This can be attributed to the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BB-BEE) policies of the country adopted post-1994. It does not appear as if a remedy for this polarisation of society is within reach, given the invasive teratogeneity of the New World Order. It was estimated that in 2007 between 25.6% and 26% of South Africa's population was unemployed (Idasa 2007). In KwaZulu-Natal this figure was estimated at 28% in September 2004 (Brooks 2004).

Estimates of poverty and inequalities measured by the living standards measure (LSM), life expectancy (LE), social assistance support (SSS), poverty gap analysis (PGA), poverty headcount index (PHI), gini co-efficient and per capita income (PCI) succinctly demonstrate the pervasive nature of poverty in South Africa (The Presidency 2007). Informalisation of the economy

and the pervasive exclusionary labour market that compels people to resort to unsustainable livelihood strategies renders the intervention of the state imperative. Norton and Conway (2002) campaign for social protection. They define social protection as public action taken in response to levels of vulnerability, risks and deprivation, which are deemed socially unacceptable within a given polity or society. This paper chapter srgues that the SNP should be regarded as a form of social protection.

Education

In line with the MDGs and the Dakar Goals that promote early childhood development (ECD), focus is placed on education as the vehicle through which the socio-economic development[2] of developing countries will be pursued. Calitz (2007), quoting Julius Nyerere, the former president of Tanzania, asserts that education should not be viewed as a way to escape poverty, but rather as a way of fighting it. Implicit in this statement is the economic benefits that should be yielded by education. Concurring with Heckman (2000), Grantham-McGregor et al. (2007) state that early childhood cognitive development is indicative of a child's schooling trajectory. Del Rosso (1999) also contends that education and learning depend on good nutrition and health. The logical implication of this statement in the broader context of socio-economic development is that the education is inherently dependent on level of wealth, good nutrition, health of the child, and then on education.

Del Rosso (1999), Heckman (2000), Grantham-McGregor (2007), Walker et al. (2007) and Engle et al. (2007) all posit that unless developing countries invest in ECD through good nutrition and health of the children, socio-economic development of the country cannot be achieved. Janke (1996) propagates for best practises in the SNPs in order to attain the multidimensional benefits mentioned hereunder. Hornby (1995) defines investment as the use of money to improve the quality of something and to give time, effort or energy to a particular task, especially for some serious purpose or useful result. It therefore stands to reason, based ont the arguments presented above, that education is a means to an end (which is the development of a country). By the same token, SNPs should logically be viewed as means to another end – education.

Examples of the impact of the SNPs on education

According to Del Rosso (1999) SNPs can improve educational quality and efficiency in the following ways:

- Alleviating short-term hunger and improving cognition.
- Increasing enrolments and improving attendance.
- Addressing micronutrient deficiencies and improving learning.
- Improving community participation and ensuring synergy in educational matters.
- Making school attractive to children, and thus improving the education of the nation.

King and Del Rosso (1994), on their study in Burkina Faso, Cape Verde and Gambia, demonstrated that SNPs produced considerable improvement in the above mentioned areas. Similar findings were reached by Levinger (1986), whilst other studies showed an inclination to inconclusive findings. For example, Kristjanson (2000) posits that after doing a secondary-data analysis of a number of studies done around the world, school meals can have some small benefits for disadvantaged children. Lusakulira-Villleneuve (1995) citing some of the plausible explanations from Kristjanson, maintains that nutritional benefits of a good school feeding programme cannot be rendered insignificant. They argue, like Politt (1990), that the problem may not lie with the food per se, but rather with some preparatory and technical aspects of the programme, which fails to motivate children to consume the food. Equally, Galante (2006) attributes the problem to inadequate structural arrangements and technical limitations associated with a lack of relevant stakeholder engagement, as was the case in Brazil.

In Bangladesh, Ahmed and Billah (1994) present a more integrated approach, incorporating broader strategies (including cash-based incentives). In this scenaraio, parents qualify for a certain amount of cash as an incentive for enrolling their children in school. Incentives such as these saw a massive influx of children at schools in 1994. It is also notable that in these countries the programmes entailed more than one meal – in most cases it was breakfast and lunch.

Health

The SNP programme's health benefits have never been disputed. A study by Kruger and Badenhorst (1994) in South Africa exemplifies the benefit of iron fortification in a SNP. HIV/AIDs, Tuberculosis (TB) (especially XDRTB), malnutrition and other opportunistic infections associated with poverty remain prevalent in South Africa and present the biggest threat to the lives of children under the age of eight. It is estimated that there were aproximately 250 000 HIV-positive children under eight years in South Africa at the time of writing. KwaZulu-Natal, it should be noted, is one of the South African provinces that has ben hardest hit by HIV/AIDS and TB (DoH 2007). The assertion for an integrated SNP by some scholars therefore remains relevant and valid for addressing the problem. In 2006 a total of 1 500 587 children in KwaZulu-Natal were classified as poor (Health Systems Trust 2001).

The history of SNPs in South Africa

For the purposes of limiting the focus of this chapter, it has been stated that the SNP started in South Africa after 1994 with the advent of democracy. This is not to say that there were no such programmes in the previous regime, as there were instances of welfarism, and at some schools learners were given bread and milk. The adoption of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) by the democratic state, however, necessitated the implementation and execution of welfare policies and programmes.

The SNP was, therefore, one of the programmes that fell under the auspices of the RDP by being one of its funded projects (Wildeman & Mbebetho 2005). Because of the need for fiscal austerity by the state in order to service its debt with international financial institutions (IFIs), and because of the institutional challenges the RDP faced coupled with the problems that the SNP became associated with (corruption, for instance) its administration and monitoring was later shifted to the Department of Health (DoH) (Wildeman & Mbebetho 2005).

This was also done to signify the shift in the focus and target of the programme. Moving its administration to the DoH symbolised the integrated nature of the scheme. According to the stipulations of the programme, there had to be other ancillary projects and campaigns such as immunisation and

de-worming of children. Rationale for this seems to concur with Janke's (1996) assertion that integrated and comprehensive programming of models for service delivery are seen as cost effective and more geared towards achieving the developmental agenda of the country. As the programme progressed, challenges to the DoH became apparent. These challenges included a shortage of school nurses and the inability to effectively incorporate the programme into the general affairs of the school (Wildeman & Mbebetho 2005).

The shift in South Africa's macro-economic policy from RDP to GEAR compounded the challenges and informed the actions taken thereafter. The country had been hailed a success in terms of its economic growth and ability to service its debt. This meant that stricter measures had to be applied in reducing spending on welfare programmes in line with the neo-liberal economic order and conditions from the IFIs (Wildeman & Mbebetho 2005).

In 2004 administration and management of the SNP shifted to the DoE. The rationale for this move was the availability of teachers compared to the shortage of nurses, as well the perceived relative ease with which the programme could fit into the general running of a school (Wildeman & Mbebetho 2005). Whilst there had been a steady decline in the funding of the programme because of macro-economic policy stipulations, 2004 saw the beginning of increased funding for the programme by the DoE. Of South Africa's 5.4% GDP the biggest portion (about one-fifth) was spent on education at the time of writing (The Presidency 2007).

For the period 2005/2006, R12 397 billion was allocated to the DoE, of which R1 098 036 was to be spent on the SNP (DoE 2007). In KwaZulu-Natal's 2007 budget announcement, the Minister of Education pledged R202 039 towards up-scaling the programme to aid poverty-stricken schools (DoE 2007). In December 2005 there were an estimated 5.3 million learners in 17 000 schools benefiting from the SNP in South Africa; of these, about 1 252 140 learners in 3 663 schools were from KwaZulu-Natal. At the time of writing, the SNP operated 156 days per school year from Monday to Friday (DoE 2005). The way in which the programme was supposed to operate should be seen in the context of the broader socio-economic developmental cluster within the country's Presidential Action Plan framework.

Research strategy

The chapter draws inferences and conclusions from five schools in KwaZulu-Natal, which serve as case studies. Three of these schools qualify and participate in the SNP. Four of these schools are situated in the Ilembe municipal district, whilst one is in the Uthungulu district. The study was comprised of both qualitative and quantitative methodological tools. Key informants were interviewed using a simple, semi-structured questionnaire. Simple and direct questions were directed at principals of the schools as well as two people referred to as honoraries who won tenders to provide food to the schools and two educators who had been assigned to monitor and manage the programmes at two of the schools. The respondents were, for example, asked if they thought the programme was beneficial or not. If they answered yes, they were asked how, and in what respect. They were also asked to compare the present situation with the one prior to the implementation of the programme. In addition to the interviews, secondary data was analysed to verify some responses from the respondents.

Case studies

Mbozamo and Mavivane primary schools

The Mbozamo and Mavivane primary schools are situated approximately 65 km north of Durban in Kwa-Dukuza, previously known as Stanger, and serve the Shakaville township. The township exemplifies the two typical economies that characterise South Africa in that it is comprised of very rich and very poor people. It is also ravaged by HIV/AIDS and unemployment. It is also situated in close proximity to traditionally Indian residential areas. This is of significance as most parents in pursuit of quality education followed the trend of removing their children from the township schools and enrolled them in Indian schools.

The SNP started in Mbozamo in 1991 and in Mavivane in 1994. The majority of parents at schools in these areas are not well off. Children walk to school and the fees are either minimal or tuition is free. By comparison, parents in the upper classes take their children to a traditionally white school, North Coast Primary, which is a fair distance away. Tuition here is relatively expensive.

Invariably, besides paying exorbitant school fees, children also use transport to travel to school and have to provide their own lunch.

Hulsug and New Guilderland primary schools

Hulsug and New Guilderland primary schools are also situated on South Africa's North Coast in a sugar estate, about 5 to 10 km further north than the first two schools mentioned. They are operated in a semi-private way in that the DoE is responsible for technical aspects of the school such as paying teachers' salaries and providing stationery as well as any other material associated with learning. Nutrition is also provided for by the DoE. A sugar company, Hulletts, is responsible for structural maintenance of the school and its security. It owns the buildings and the land they are built on. These schools service learners who are children of Hulletts employees.

Almost all the parents of these children are illiterate and work on the sugarcane fields. These children also pose as an additional workforce after school and during school holidays when it is harvest season; a practice that is not enforced by the company, but rather driven by the parents themselves the for purpose of augmenting their salaries. At the time of writing, the average net income of these households was below R500 a month and families were dependent on food rations of maize meal, dried beans and samp provided by their employer. Glaring poverty is evident even on the clothing of the learners. Houses are mainly in the form of compounds and RDP homes that have recently been built in the advent of democracy.

Research findings and discussion

Findings will be captured and discussed in the context of the objectives and benefits of the SNP.

General enrolment rate

In all the schools assessed there was a marked increase in the General Enrolment Ratio (GER), which can be attributed directly to the SNP. In the sugar-cane estates parents do not enrol their children until the feeding programme has commenced. This concurs with the contention by Cloete

et al. (2006) that assessment or evaluation of the programme helps to locate the period during which the impact is likely to occur and thus increase precision of programme application. The principal at Mbozamo Primary noted an increase in enrolment rates of about 30%. A pilot study (not related to this paper) conducted in Malawi concurs with this argument. The study established that the SNP led to a 5% increase in enrolment at the four schools examined (World Food Programme 1996).

Improvement of intellectual capacity

Concurring with Janke's (1996) assertion, there was marked improvement in the learners' performance in all the schools surveyed. At Mbazamo, for instance, the principal (Mr Dube) noted that the average pass mark was 48% before the introduction of the SNP. Immediately after the introduction of the programme it shot to 60%. In Mavivane the teacher responsible for the nutrition programme (Mrs Ngubane) reported that children who were previously not good in mathematics and science had developed an interest and were mastering those subjects. A previous failure rate of about 10 in 48 has dropped to about 2 in 48. General bad behaviour and petty fighting between learners at the school are also said to have diminished, argues Mrs Ngubane.

Decline in school dropout

Accoridng to Mrs Ngubane, there has been a sharp decline in the previous dropout rate of between 10% and 12% (at the time of writing it was between 2% and 5%) at Mavivane. The majority of these dropouts were also occurring among the wealthier learners and could be attributed to either the relocation of the family or parents taking their children to Indian schools because of the perception that they have superior education compared to that of the township.

Decline in absenteeism

The decline in absenteeism is especially remarkable in the context of the sugar-cane estate schools, where learners generally come from households that lack

educational values. These are the children whose parents would not hesitate to take them out of school during busy seasons to work in the fields in order to augment household income. In all the schools surveyed the respondents reported that learners were staying on after school to play and participate in extramural activities. Previously many of these children would rush away after school to go and work in nearby Indian houses or to beg on the streets.

General improvement in health

Teachers have reported that learners at these schools generally look healthy and are less sickly than before. Teachers have reported that the SNP brought tremendous improvement in the health and lives of the children who are affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic ravaging the country. This includes those children who are infected and are sick because of the disease, as well as those whose parents' infirmity and confinement has made it difficult to care for their families.

Challenges and limitations of the programme

According to principals and teachers the greatest challenges and limitations are:

- Grade 7 not participating not because they are not hungry but because of peer pressure and stigma felt as they approach puberty or adolescent stage.
- Human resource capacity – only one person assists and this poses problems as learners are often asked to help out with washing of dishes and cleaning. This consumes teaching time.
- Structural capacity – storage space and preparation area not conducive as the schools were not erected with programmes such as these in mind.
- Meals are few, only one at mid-morning and this does not cater for early classes as these learners come from far.
- Meals are incomplete in terms of nutrients as fruits are not included in the meals

The following challenges were experienced by the honoraries:[3]

- Inadequate funds – these women claim to receive R1 per child, which is not sufficient for a complete well balanced diet, even if they improvise for affordable nutritious items. Soya is the most favoured form of protein. The department expects them to provide a fruit in season at least once a month.

This is often not impossible.

- Salaries for co-operatives – the standard salary for the co-ops (set by the department) is meagre R300. This often becomes a contentious issue with the women as they feel it is inadequate. At times they resort to augmenting these salaries from their own coffers, a move that depletes their negligible profits.
- There is lack of community participation and integration of the programme into the broader developmental agenda of the community, which would alleviate lack of capacity and other associated problems. If, for instance, mothers of these learners would come to school to assist with the dishing up and cleaning afterwards, children would not have to do these tasks which further diminish the number of hours available for learning. Additionally, if there was integration of the programmes, where food was sourced from the vegetable gardens at school or from nearby communities, the cost of running the programme might also be reduced while contributing to the development of the broader community and country.
- Fuel presents a major problem and two of these schools do not have access to electricity. Hullets provides electricity for lights in the classrooms only. The gas that is preferred costs R600/48l cylinder, whereas the department allocates only R300 for fuel. This again has implications on the profits.

Validity of the study

As a form of data triangulation the study expanded to two more schools that either did not have the SNP in place or was located in a different district. It was hoped that this would reveal information that would serve to either corroborate the findings and hypothesis that forms the basis in the case studies, or fail to confirm it. This venture was therefore executed with some anticipation that the emerging data might fail to verify the hypothesis and conclusions drawn from the case studies; particularly with the school in the Uthungulu district which directly matched the socio-economic background of the schools in the case studies.

Enquiry into the set-up and conditions at the former Indian school in the area, Dawnview Primary, revealed that there were no problems in enrolment rate, pass rate, drop-out rate and the general health of their learners. These factors had all been under control, despite the absence of the SNP. In fact,

the principal of Dawnview Primary School argued that even when they had received a donation from a Muslim community there had been no change in these facets. The rationale for this, he argued, was that children paid to travel to the school, which was situated in town. These were therefore not hungry children. Poverty and hunger remains the biggest motivating factors for the the impact of the SNP witnessed in the case studies.

The principal of Mzuvukile Lower Primary School at Nseleni township in the Uthungulu district described poverty and hunger as the largest factor behind the benefits of the SNPs. The programme has, for her, once more revealed the importance of an integrated service, especially in the context of HIV/AIDS. Echoing sentiments of the perspective that argues for a more integrated service, she argued that the holistic approach will prove invaluable in the context of HIV/AIDS. She also reported that because of the number of HIV/AIDS orphans, child-headed homes and other social ills, the programme has managed to serve as leverage with which to confront the challenges and forge a life for this otherwise doomed strata of society. Her school, she asserts, has exemplified this approach by growing vegetables and raising funds to enable them to provide food parcels for learners to take home to suffering families.

This chapter acknowledges that the SNP has an impact in the improvement of learners' intellectual capacity. Tomlinson (2007) demonstrates this link in showing that the high iron content in food aids blood oxygenation, which helps to feed the brain. He also states that increased attention span is a direct result of energy-boosting nutrition. This chapter seeks to demonstrate that poverty and hunger are the driving forces for the SNP to be successful in poverty-stricken communities.

Limitations of the study

The national public servants strike that took place in 2007 resulted in the unavailability of some critical informants for this study, such as parents of the learners and women who assist in the preparation of meals at schools. Another of the biggest limitations to this study was the size of the sample. Whilst an argument can be advanced to question the representative nature of the study, it has unleashed more insight in the argument for sustenance and maintenance of the SNP. The author therefore proposes that the programme be up-scaled.

What implications do these results have on policy?

Conway and Norton (2002) postulate that for social protection policies to be effective they must adhere to the following principles:

- They must be responsive to the needs and realities of the livelihoods they are intended to enhance.
- They must be sustainable.
- They must be affordable.
- They must be mainstreamed institutionally with sustainable structures.
- They should be built on principles of utilising the capabilities of individuals and communities.
- They should help households and individuals reduce unnecessary exposure to risks.
- They must deal with adverse events when they occur.
- They should help the poor to escape poverty traps.
- They should contribute to equality-giving opportunity.
- They should promote social cohesion.

This chapter has indicated that the SNP is regarded as a strategy that enhances the broader policies of the country, such as the Constitution. The principles cited by Conway and Norton (2002) present us with a challenging yet simplistic perspective with which to assess and monitor whether the strategies we have instituted should indeed be maintained and continued in light of whatever situation could be pervasive in our society/community/country. The author shall therefore attempt to analyse each principle in the context of the SNP discussed in this chapter.

Responsiveness to the needs and realities of the livelihoods they are intended to enhance

The author wholeheartedly supports the sentiment of responsiveness and proposes that hunger is the most rational explanation as to why parents desire access to SNPs. Data from the case studies and control schools inform us that it is children whose livelihoods cannot be classified as vibrant and socially stimulating that are eager to access the programme. It the programme is designed to address these realities, it is a programme worth maintaining and fortifying in order to maximise the benefits.

Sustainability

Vedung (1997) maintains that the sustainability of a programme should be viewed in terms of the broader impact it has on various aspects of society; that is, improvement in the social, economic, institutional and human indicators that the programme stakeholders targeted. It should be noted that these indicators are intertwined. Invariably one has an impact on the other. Human indicators, for example, would be indicated by the extent to which the programme has resulted in social cohesion (a social indicator). This can also be illustrated by the improvement in the quality of life of the community it targets. Whilst there is no indication that the SNP has led to a more cohesive and socially integrated society, it can be argued that there has been remarkable improvement in the quality of life of the children who are recipients in the schools studied.

Economic advantage can be the extent to which the programme helps to improve the economic life of the members of a society and/or contributes to the economic development of the country. South Africa's Integrated Development Programmes succinctly point to the strategic intention by the state to institute an integrated economy. The Honorary in the Mbozamo case study expresses this concern (lack of integration of services, integration of the SNP into the broader developmental strategy) when she complains about the lack of involvement in the community participation (social) programme and absence of agricultural economic links limiting the potential of the SNP. This shows, therefore, how this shortfall impedes economic development. A study by Politt and Cueto (1996) attests to the effectiveness of SNPS when there is synergistic interaction amongst stakeholders, from the private sector to the lowest member of the society. Cohen (1991) illuminates this synergy of integrated approach when seeking to address school-related problems in a manner that contributes to economic development and does not alienate other sectors of the economy, particularly the small/micro economies. He contends that micro-enterprises should be fully involved and used in address school nutrition issues. Active participation might, for instance, ensure that street vendors sell more nutritious food.

Affordability

On the question of affordability, this chapter seeks to reiterate the assertion by Heckman (2000) that on issues and programmes addressing issues that are of national interest, social benefits by far outweigh issues of cost ('cost' being the precise amount of cash it takes to implement the programme). In any case, as argued above, integration of the programme and community involvement could help to address concerns associated with cost.

On the issue of food security, Hicks (1996) contends that there should be other forms of income-generation strategies that may be accompanied by agricultural extension in order to fortify the programme and ensure sustainability. Some economic logic can perhaps be illustrated by a counter-question that seeks to estimate the cost of addressing the problems perpetrated and precipitated by the social ills caused by hunger. Del Rosso (1999) maintains that programme architects should analyse and identify financing and costs options. He contends that cost alone can indicate little about the value, even though cost effectiveness can provide invaluable information on the impact of the programme on actualising the targeted objectives.

When providing insight on the practical ways of improving public policy again, Cloete et al. (2006) maintain that there are implicit and concrete policy objectives. This chapter sees the SNP as something that is based on the concrete objective of enhancing education for schoolgoing children, as opposed to adopting the strategy as a strategic intervention to address the glaring poverty and hunger that is devastating the communities in the lowest social stratum. The author therefore postulates that this strategy implicitly harbours an objective of addressing poverty-related problems. Why then not institute and sustain it as a strategy that looks beyond the education (primary) realm to the broader regional, national and global objectives of eradicating poverty by 2015 (MDG 1)? Cloete et al. (2006) assert that it is crucial that we learn from current programmes for future policy review, design and defence.

The contentions in this chapter therefore seek to posit arguments for defence of the SNP in South Africa, with a hope that the programme can be up-scaled to schools and grades that, at the time of writing, do not receive assistance. As stated above, locating the periods in which the impact is likely to be felt will assist in the programme roll-out. Policies and strategies can therefore be

enacted so that the SNP commences on time to avoid unwarranted delays of enrolment of learners at schools.

Conclusion

This chapter has established the positive impact the SNP has had on the health of learners, enrolment rate, pass rate, attention spans of learners and the decline in the drop-out rate at the case-study schools. It has also established that the main factor that has led to this drastic improvement is the alleviation of hunger and poverty in the communities that are serviced by these schools. It has determined that the challenge, as captured by Wildeman and Nombebethe (2005), lies in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, and also in logistics in terms of the inadequacy of the fund and lack of integration.

It is the contention of this chapter that in the context of unwavering poverty and pervasive hunger compounded by socio-economically inclined diseases such as AIDS, benefits of institutionalising SNPs outweigh the disadvantages cited by some scholars. Some scholars argue that institutionalising welfare programmes poses a threat of creating dependency and stifling economic development. If the principles of sustainability are considered, it is clear that nutrition programmes with political will and commitment have the potential to be sustainable with the few strategic adjustments. This is particularly imperative where the programme is designed to intervene on a matter that is considered not only a national ailment, but also a regional and more profoundly localised problem in provinces such as KwaZulu-Natal. This chapter exposes the need for more comprehensive academic and social research on the benefits of the SNP, especially with regards to the notion of sustainability. Research examining the impact of the social programmes focusing on the constraints and benefits of the SNP is essential, as it also looks at the possibilities for remedying its associated problems.

Notes

1. By 'South' reference is made to the less developed countries or the Global South as defined by Warren (1980). Also included will be those countries Castels (in Graaf 2003) refers to as the 'fourth world'.
2. Socio-economic development, according to this chapter, encompasses all spheres of social life, including addressing gender disparities.
3. Those who have won tenders to provide nutrition to learners are known as honoraries.

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SECTION 3:
Critical reflections on education and poverty policy
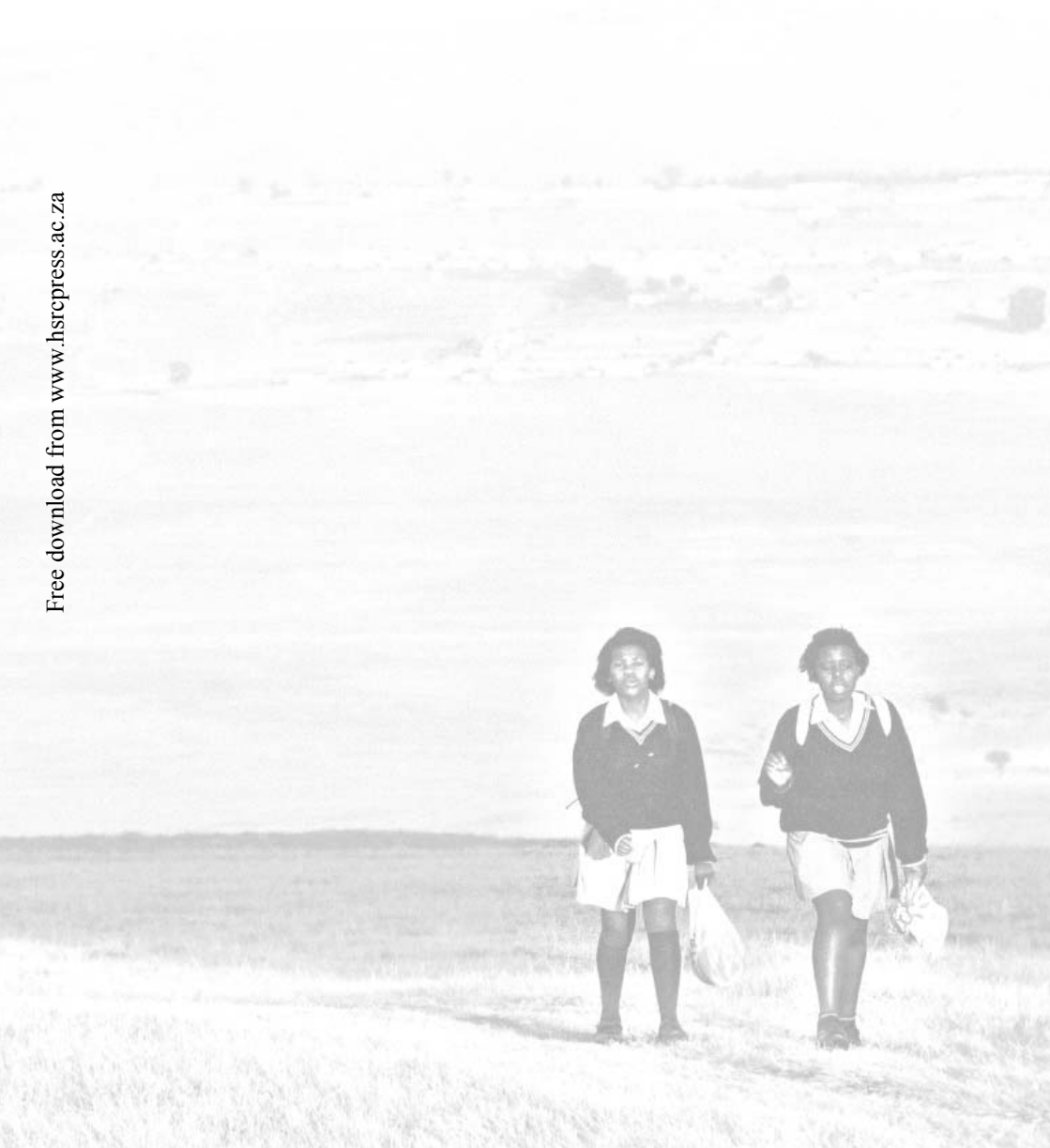
8 The complexity of systems change in education

Graeme Bloch

Two recent newspaper articles on education caught my attention as I wrote this. The first was by John Pampallis[1] and appeared in the *Business Day.* As a parent and member of a school governing body (SGB) in Parktown, Johannesburg, Pampallis was arguing that the no-fee policy and pressure around exemptions should not detract from the contribution a school like Parktown High has to make. I happen to agree with Pampallis, partly because I have also had contact with some of the work that progressives in the SGB are doing to ensure that schools like Parktown High (formerly Model C and still mostly white) play a positive role in education transformation and provide access to such schools for a wider spectrum of children.

The crux of the issue is why a well known 'old-school socialist' and liberation fighter like Pampallis would be taking the trouble to argue for an institution sometimes critiqued as being part of the system of privilege? I believe the answer is clear: implementing change in education is enormously complex. A wrong move can have drastic impact and affect the lives of children. All parts of the state system and society can play a role, and should be drawn in, to shape the broader social challenges as well as the specific educational challenges that can give impetus to change and shared opportunity.

In other words, educational change calls for enormous nuance and sensitivity to the histories and possibilities of intervention. Perhaps what Pampallis hinted at, but didn't quite say is that we need to find ways to draw on a range of strengths and progressive commitments. It is possible to mobilise very broadly in this complex field and get wide participation to improve the quality and reach of education.

The second article was by Linda Chisholm,[2] and also appeared in the *Business Day*. It was also on the no-fee policy. I believe Chisholm was arguing that critique of the no-fee policy is getting ahead of itself. Bureaucracies and governments tend to work in a piecemeal fashion – and one thus needs to

situate education victories in their context. Then we can move on and define the next challenge and other elements of the poverty impact on schools. The context is the state-aided schools policy for whites which was rolled out after the 1920s, and the state-funded 'cheap' black schools that expanded after 1976 with the legacy of a divided and uneven school system. Chisholm argued that we need to see things historically and understand how structures fit in and are reinforced. Processes of change are long-term and run deep.

I don't know if, like me, you felt a bit disappointed at the way education was not highlighted in President Thabo Mbeki's 2007 State of the Nation address.[3] A chance was missed to really elevate consideration of the role that education plays, and to call on society more broadly to rally around and address the aspects that are not working. Perhaps this reflects the current state of education in South Africa.

While educational change runs deep and is long-term, it is also crucial and urgent. We need a long-term perspective and a historical imagination; but we also need to focus and prioritise society around specific actions to achieve this future. Education is deeply embedded in society and its structures and it draws into itself all the fractures and strains that define the society around it. Thus education plays a role in reproducing all the inequalities and values of society as it is, but it also carries the hopes and aspirations of society to emerge out of inequality, and thus carries forward the liberatory potential of that society. The contradiction or paradox of education is that while it points to the means of escape for both the individual and the society as a whole, those who 'fail' receive a hidden message that often reinforces exclusion. It bears repeating that education is deeply embedded in society, its values and structures, but this is not a simple relationship. Education also carries a forward-looking component – the hopes of a new outlook, of a society based on growth and expansion, combined with a sharing of wealth and opportunity, and the social solidarity and shared citizenship that underlie indicators of development.

Education contributes to the base of skills that enables an economy and society to function and grow; and allows the individual access to channels of advancement and hope. Further, it provides the citizenship and social orientations that ensure peace and stability, and shared perspectives for joint activity to enable society to progress for the benefit of all.

If education carries so many of the responsibilities of wider society, it is not surprising that society at large bears down on what happens in our schools and the wider education system. The priorities, the choices of where to invest, the availability of a range of resources that support or hinder the education project, can surely not be located within the education system alone. To understand education and to improve it, one needs to look beyond the schooling system to wider society.

It is unsurprising that we will find many of the vested skills and resources for technical solutions that can improve education within broader society. However, few solutions will work if they are treated in a purely technical way. The communities themselves, with their networks, assets and attitudes, are the crucial resource base, and mobilising them to support education can never be a purely technical process if solutions are to embed and deepen their hold.

Our own particular histories, structures of governance and institutional arrangements (as well as a host of other factors) will affect the possibilities for applying specific technical solutions. The ways in which people are organised, from churches to trade unions to parent management bodies, all affect the possibilities and means for improvement. Beyond that, one might say that money and physical resources are perhaps only part of the solutions we need to seek.

Education in crisis

South African education is in crisis. It is absolutely true that a host of achievements – such as the merging of racially divided education systems, the re-orientation and high priority given to education in national and provincial budgets (over 6% of GDP) (Fiske & Ladd 2005) and a range of day-to-day services from textbook supply to education support and the facilitation of matric exams – are no mean source of pride. There is immense planning and logistical expertise, as well as excellent co-ordination and management, required to facilitate each of these roles and functions.

But South Africa is a country on the brink of expanded growth and the current production of high-level skills is insufficient to meet the stresses and demands this growth implies. Furthermore, in a country with great expectations of equity, education is failing in a way that particularly impacts on poor, rural and township schools.

It can be argued that 'for 60 to 80% of our children, education reinforces marginalisation, condemning them to a second economy of unemployment and survival'.[4] At worst, many township and rural schools have been described as 'sinkholes', where children are 'warehoused' rather than educated. There are therefore two parallel education systems in South Africa, mirroring the two economies that divide its population.

In terms of a number of key indicators, the education system is failing to make the grade. The 2006 and 2007 matric results confirmed exactly how unspectactular our progress has been in terms of outcomes, and how much work remains to be done. This weakness finds expression in relatively poor outcomes across the school system.

South Africa's basic reading scores, and mathematics and science literacy, are consistently amongst the world's worst (including much of Africa). Data based on a 2005 report made public in 2006 show that only 20% of learners in grade 6 could do mathematics at the appropriate grade level (average score 27%) and only 40% in language of instruction (classroom language) (average score 38%).[5] ('Average score' shows the average level of attainment in the tests as set.)

Even more alarming are the disparities amongst schools. In one 2001 study, where 65% of children in Model C (previously white) schools in the Western Cape attained appropriate scores at sixth-grade level, the figure for previously Department of Education and Training (DET) (black) schools was only 0.1% (Soudien 2005). This dire picture was confirmed recently at a national level where the average score for sixth-grade mathematics in the lowest fee-paying schools (under R100) where about 72% of children are located, was 22%. Only some 5% of students do higher-grade mathematics and science for matric and the matric exemption rate is static or falling at 17% (CDE 2005; Van der Berg 2005). In general, probably some 50% of learners do not even make it through the school system and drop out before completion, with one recent study claiming only 32% of those who were in grade 10 in 2003 matriculated.[6]

Surveys speak of an overwhelming sense of sadness amongst South Africa's young unemployed, and circles of doom that reinforce their marginalisation and lack of hope. Where students should expect opportunities and assistance, they find their hopes and dreams crumbling before their eyes, and face obstacles rather than ladders to progress and self-esteem.

The depth of the problem

The first acknowledgement we as a society need to make is to realise the depth and reality of the problem in education. As Martin Carnoy put it recently: 'Poor children in South Africa really do get the short end of the stick' (personal communication, October 2006). This is without denying the enormous achievements of many schools and teachers who perform superb jobs and continue to deliver a quality service to their learners.

Some of the solutions rest within the schools. The following issues need to be considered:

- Firstly, classroom (pedagogical) factors are central. These include teacher capabilities, subject knowledge, time-on-task, teaching method and application, and availability of textbooks and materials. These can be termed 'in-school resources' or 'infrastructure' (and include human capabilities). Teacher issues are crucial in this regard. Low content knowledge, burdens of administration, suspicion around and difficulties with outcomes-based education (OBE), insufficient experience and much ill discipline are just some of the issues teachers have to deal with. It is unsurprising that reports show that more than half of teachers have thought of leaving the profession and morale is uniformly low.
- Secondly, organisational or systems back-up and resources are crucial. How efficiently does the education system deliver at national, provincial and district levels? Are structures appropriate and in synergy? Included is the organisation and management of the school and the principal's leadership and management capabilities, as well as the role and functioning of structures such as school governing bodies. Does the system support the teachers who are responsible for delivering the education and pedagogical outcomes in the classroom? Are there adequate and relevant systems for monitoring teachers and their presence in the classroom, penalties for consistent absenteeism or under-performance, as well as systems to monitor and assess delivery of the curriculum?

In South Africa there have been errors in the surrounding policy environment that impact on schooling; what one might call 'policy breaches'. For example, the progressivist optimism of OBE contributed to overload and massive failures amongst poorly resourced schools and teachers. Similarly, for a range of reasons, there has been a tendency for relations with teacher unions to

become conflict-based 'labour relations' rather than processes of mutual professional development. This is a matter that has not been adequately examined.

One cause, or at least one reason, for the intensification of these issues, has been administrative overload and the difficulty of co-ordinating aspects of government in a complex environment. The Departments of Labour and Education struggle to relate in advancing the skills-development strategy, as do institutions such as the South African Qualifications Authority (Saqa) and the Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (Setas). Provincial and other institutional disjunctures are practically entrenched by constitutional guarantees and structures – one could not, for example, send a professional team from Gauteng to Limpopo without a complex set of memoranda and agreements.

It must be said that at many levels the Ministry and Department of Education are succeeding in their task. The weaknesses of the current education system have been publicly acknowledged and strategies developed. The range and mix of programmes – from the Quality Improvement and Development Strategy (QIDS) to Further Education and Training (FET) recapitalisation to district improvement – are probably suitably identified and crafted.

The point, however, is that simply rolling out a range of programmes in a technical way is unlikely to get to grips with the deep set of structures sustaining inequality and exclusion in our schools and education system.

The complexity of the system

The second acknowledgment we need to make relates to the complexity of the education system. Everyone has a view on the ideal solutions, but the solutions are not simple and there are very few quick fixes. It is going to take a great deal of thought, organisation and effort to build consensus and direction around core priorities. Such mobilised social consensus is key to ensuring multiple focused energies.

Schools in South Africa today have a great deal to contend with. Hunger, malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, child abuse, criminal gangs, lack of books or people to assist at home and the general ravages of poverty all impact on what

happens in the classroom. The heritage of apartheid and colonialism is not just a slogan and schools today deal with very real legacies of the past.

Even our most postive achievements can turn into areas of worry. New opportunities for young black graduates mean the brightest and best are reluctant to join the ranks of low-paid educators in uninspiring situations with unsure prospects. Added to this, the post-apartheid era has opened up room for a first generation black academic achievers who must now make it with little parental or social guidance. It is unsurprising that many of our tertiary students as well as younger learners drop out.

A range of out-of-school factors impact heavily on learner performance. There are historical and sociological factors, which are deeply entrenched; but more generally, factors, which together can be categorised as social capital (such as the impact of poverty and living conditions; the availability of electricity or transport, HIV/AIDS and the growing phenomenon of HIV/AIDS orphans and child-headed households, gender inequalities and violence, the education levels of parents and their ability to assist with schoolwork, and the existence of learning materials or books in the home) constitute some of the strongest reasons for inequalities and the relatively weak outcomes in poor communities and schools.

The impact of violence in schools

In September 2006 (and again in 2007/2008), the Human Rights Commission held hearings on the extent of school violence in South Africa, including sexual violence and inappropriate sexual behaviour. Evidence showed how the negative impact of violence at individual, school and community levels combines with a host of other factors to lock poor schools and communities into a cycle of marginalisation and poor performance. Gang and school-based violence is symptomatic of a broader cycle of social exclusion and marginalisation of poorer communities.

Violence from outside also impacts directly on pedagogy and teaching (areas of 'in-school' resources available to children); classroom teaching arrangements and morale are impacted, disrupting the necessary environment for effective learning and teaching. Instability and conflict in schools affect smooth organisational functioning, especially because of its random and unpredictable nature.

Lastly, the impact of crime and gang-related violence within the community affects learners in a host of ways, ranging from attendance to mental attitude to fear and actual physical injury, including rape. Direct and indirect involvement with gangs provides a set of social alternatives with largely destructive effects on learning as well as on social integration. High levels of community violence and organised crime ensure that poorer communities affected by violence and gangsterism send their children to school with impaired social capital.

At every turn, the networks, assets, capabilities and social capital available to poor communities are subject to stress and pressure that reproduces the conditions of their ongoing exclusion. The cycle of exclusion and marginalisation is deepened and reproduced through the schooling system itself with the most negative effects on poor schools that can least afford it.

Non-school interventions

The following is a list of non-school interventions that could impact on schooling outcomes:

- Programmes which address gender violence and inequality. This includes issues as simple as getting running water to every household, which may liberate young girls' time.
- HIV/AIDS prevention. Along with a host of other health issues, from intestinal worms, to malaria, to diabetes and malnutrition, HIV/AIDS is one of the biggest issues affecting South Africa's youth.
- School feeding schemes and nutritional support. These can also play a role in mobilising communities around schooling problems and act as providers at various levels.
- Basic infrastructure: There has been no public research that shows how improvements in electricity and water delivery in the first decade of democracy may have improved opportunities for studying in the home or at school. Housing, roads, sportsfields and community libraries all impact learner performance and attendance.
- ICT connection: Cheap broadband solutions remain the Achilles heel for most African countries, with knock-on effects on what is possible for technology in our schools; and thus for students' potential to compete in a globalised and connected world.
- Employment opportunities and entrepreneurial training. The availability of employment places a limitation on the educational choices young people

can make. If one's parents and grandparents have never been employed, how does one learn the social skills, disciplines and outlooks necessary for successful entry into the job market?

• Socio-economic rights. Lastly, the issue of socio-economic rights and how they are realised, whether through social grants or other aspects of social support, to guarantee or at least assist the movement of vast sectors of the population out of poverty. Infrastructure being put in place to help South Africa achieve the MDGs and other targets are relevant in this regard.

What these areas undoubtedly show is that effective delivery will require co-ordination and political will. There is no doubt that collaborative government is difficult to put in place.

Apart from the prioritisation of these areas, and an understanding of their impact on education, is there the management and skills' capacity to ensure delivery? This is a question to be asked at provincial and district level. It underlines my earlier point about a mobilised society and the extent of will and priority that is essential to ensure all the school factors and non-school elements work together (at least) – and coincide in a planned, deliberate and strategised way (at best).

'Hard infrastructure' and 'soft development'

I work for the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), which places a strong focus on infrastructure delivery (especially at a municipal level). In many ways, education is some distance from its central concerns. Yet the Bank is clear on how even hard infrastructure delivery often comes up against the shortage of skills, and thus the inability to maintain and extend the uses and benefits of this infrastructure. I have been intrigued by the process of getting such institutions to understand the limitations of a technicist or narrow approach to their own specific mandate. It has been heartening to see how a wider definition of social infrastructure has been adopted and how the Bank's vision has broadened to encompass the need for sympathetic involvement in schooling and skills development.

Further, how does one understand one's own location and institutional advantages so that one is best aligned to make a meaningful and consistent contribution within a broad framework or strategy?

What is delivered in education is a social product in which there are a host of 'soft' areas. These range from issues such as access, throughput and quality to language and systems of knowledge. There are also practical questions of all kinds relating to support mechanisms, availability of materials, the use of information for planning, and so on. In addition, there are issues beyond education, such as the impact of community factors, or unemployment and the labour market. The actual product delivered – a package of content, skills, emotional development and values – is dependent on relationships at classroom level.

It is clear that, especially for an 'infrastructure' bank like ours, an expanded understanding of infrastructure is needed to allow for the tackling of the problems in the education sphere. Not only is a narrow focus on purely physical infrastructure misplaced, it would also severely limit the ability to put in place any of the wider or background systems that would allow effective use of buildings, factories, electricity, water and even ICT infrastructure. It is human systems and processes that turn buildings or plants into productive entities. This argument has won sympathetic approval in the DBSA and finds expression in a generous interpretation and understanding of the term 'infrastructure'. The very nature of the social and educational product in education urges the DBSA to a more complex framework of interaction and intervention.

Similarly, our understanding of education and its social context must surely encourage a broader understanding of the non-school and broader social factors that impact on the delivery of quality education. When we look at investments, the impact of 'hard' and non-school infrastructure on the educational issues should be explicitly discussed and framed with targets, outcomes and clear expectations.

Conclusion

I think there is a need to establish a clear set of national priorities and goals for education, with a medium-term perspective and plan. It is necessary that we clearly define our goals and expectations – what we expect from our teachers and students, in what proportion and how we will try to get which learners through what levels in our school and education system? How do teachers recover their liberatory role, and what are the behaviours and areas

of emphasis that communities can expect? Where do we want to be and when do we aim to be there?

South Africa desperately needs to mobilise a national consensus around education, both to facilitate a massive mobilisation of involvement and pressure by ordinary citizens, and to overcome the deeply embedded structural relations of inequality and differentiated access that define so much of the education system itself.

The future of our developing society, and the potential and legitimate expectations of our youth for a better future, demand bold and comprehensive thinking and solutions.

Notes

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2. Chisholm L, Learning about education from history, *Business Day*, 25 January 2007
3. www.info.gov.za/speeches/2007/07020911001001.htm
4. Blaine S, Sorry tale of two education systems in one country, *Business Day*, 17 October 2007
5. See Department of Education website: Intermediate Phase Systemic Evaluation (grade 6) report, 7 Feb 2006, http://www.education.gov.za/dynamic/dynamic.aspx?pageid=329&catid=10&category=Reports&legtype=null
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9 The boundaries of care: Education policy interventions for vulnerable children

Ursula Hoadley

This chapter interrogates a growing vision of schools as sites of care and support for vulnerable children, especially in the context of HIV/AIDS. The chapter is based on two research activities: a desk review of projects working in the area of schools in the context of HIV/AIDS and poverty (Hoadley 2006); and documentation of a particular project in the Free State province of South Africa (Hoadley 2007). The author also considers the South African policy framework for schools and vulnerable children. The chapter begins by sketching out some of the major education policies pertaining to vulnerable children, especially in the context of HIV and AIDS. It then offers three cautionary notes in relation to the thrust of these policies, and those programmes attempting to implement them. The first is a consideration of the context of implementation – the schooling system. The second is the resourcing of these policies. The third considers policy visions of schools and teachers. How schools and teachers are conceptualised both in policies and programmes is problematised. The misalignment between the policies around schools and vulnerable children, the resourcing of these policies and their contexts of implementation as well as the implications for thinking about expanded roles for schools and teachers are brought into relief.

The role of schools in the South African policy context

In the context of HIV/AIDS, a vast number of policies promoting and supporting an expanded role for schools, particularly in response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the need for greater care and support for vulnerable children, have emerged over the past six years. Some of the key policies advocating expanded roles and functions for schools are outlined here.

The *National Education Policy on HIV/AIDS for Learners and Educators* (DoE 1999) and the *HIV/AIDS Emergency: Department of Education Guidelines for*

Educators (DoE 2000a) both give schools a specific responsibility to develop school HIV/AIDS policies and accompanying health advisory committees to respond to the barriers learners face as result of the impact of HIV/AIDS.

The *Norms and Standards for Educators* (DoE 2000b: 4), which specifies the roles and competencies expected of teachers, includes the 'community, citizenship and a pastoral role'. It states: 'Within the school, the educator will demonstrate an ability to develop a supportive and empowering environment for the learner and respond to the educational and other needs of learners and fellow educators. Furthermore, the educator will develop supportive relations with parents and other key persons and organisations, based on a critical understanding of community and environmental development issues.'

The *Education White Paper 6 Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* (DoE 2001a), or 'White Paper 6', supports schools in responding to all learning barriers facing children, including those resulting from disability, psychosocial disturbances or socio-economic deprivation. *HIV/AIDS: Care and Support of Affected and Infected Learners. A Guide for Educators* (DoH 2001) provides guidelines for educators on how to care for and support children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS in the school context; and *the National Integrated Plan for Children and Youth Infected and Affected by HIV/AIDS* (DoE 2001b) advocates inter-departmental collaboration between the DoE, DoH and Department of Social Development (DoSD) in responding to the needs of children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS.

The *National School Health Policy and Implementation Guidelines* (DoH 2002) encourages schools to establish school-based support teams to respond to the health and other barriers vulnerable children face. In 2002 it was reported that the National School Nutrition Programme fed about 5.2 million learners enrolled at 16 000 primary schools (DoE 2002). In 2005 this role was broadened to move beyond school feeding to setting up school gardens and teaching good nutrition and healthy lifestyle.

The DoE's *Tirisano Plan of Action (2003–2005)* (DoE 2003: 8–9) gives schools 'an active role in the identification and registration [of children] for child support grants' and other care and support functions in the context of HIV/AIDS. It also asserts that the school should be 'an indispensable centre for the wider community's educational, social and cultural needs and interests'.

The Education Laws Amendment Bill (DoE 2005) legislates that where people are living under poverty-stricken conditions, schools be declared 'no-fee schools' (implemented as of 2006). This Bill is a departure from previous attempts to alleviate fee burdens on schools and parents because it also increases the amount of money for recurrent expenditure to the poorest one-fifth of schools, making these schools less reliant on fees and thus able to feasibly abolish them.

It is clear from the number and coverage of the policies above that the policy framework for the care of vulnerable children in South Africa in relation to schooling is extensive. It is widely argued, however, that it persists in being largely symbolic. There are three policy documents that are of particular concern in relation to the concerns of this chapter: *Tirisano* (DoE 2003), *Education White Paper 6* (DoE 2001a) and the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (DoE 2000b). These are discussed in more detail below.

Education White Paper 6

Possibly the most significant of the policy documents advocating the care and protection of vulnerable children is the *Education White Paper 6 Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive education and Training System* (DoE 2001a). This White Paper marks a significant shift from previous inclusive education policy, recognising systemic as well as individual barriers to learning (Colling 2005). It notes that 'different learning needs arise from a range of factors including physical, mental, sensory, neurological and developmental impairments, *psychosocial disturbances*, differences in intellectual ability, particular life experiences or *socio-economic deprivation*' (DoE 2001a: 7, emphasis added).

Of crucial importance in this document is the policy directive that schools create site-based support teams in schools in order to address some of the effects of socio-economic deprivation and psychosocial disturbances for learners. The primary function of site-based support teams is to co-ordinate educator and learner support within the institution by identifying institutional, educator and learner needs and strengths.

Site-based support teams are also required to ensure that the support for educators and learners is properly co-ordinated. They are to 'invite expertise

from the local community, district support teams and higher education institutions' (DoE 2001: 6). Their precise purpose and activities are spelt out in the document:

> Site-based teams need to follow up the learner needs identified through Learner Profiles, accompanied by intervention strategies tried out in classrooms. They also play a crucial role in identifying institutional needs, and ensuring that there are on-going possibilities for professional growth, skills acquisition and support. Site-based support teams should be supported by management, which should provide regular times for meetings and planning sessions. These sessions could be facilitated initially by district support teams until the capacity of the site-based team has been enhanced. (DoE 2001a: 5)

In this way policy calls for the establishment of a number of activities in school to take place under the management of a new structure, with teachers and managers taking on new roles.

The Tirisano Plan of Action (2003–2005)

Tirisano (meaning 'working together') was a response to the persistent problems in education following South Africa's first five years of democracy (DoE 2003). A 'call to action' embodied in nine 'educational priorities' which were translated into operational programmes in '*Tirisano*' was issued by the education administration in 1999. These priorities set the tone of the educational policy implementation agenda for the years that followed. Two were notable in relation to the interests of this paper – Priority 3: 'Schools must become centres of community life'; and Priority 9: 'We must deal urgently and purposefully with the HIV/AIDS emergency in and through the education and training system'.

The policy stresses the opening up of schools to their communities, and responding to the problems and issues confronting children there. Although *Tirisano* set up the possibilities for structures and personnel to deal with HIV/AIDS, there were problems in the implementation (not least under-staffing), and national and provincial departments' lack of access to the expertise of people such as planners, demographers, economists, sociologists, anthropologists and care workers (Coombe 2000). Another problem was

inter-sectoral inertia, a problem starkly evidenced in relation to HIV/AIDS strategies and action plans more widely.

Norms and standards for educators

In overhauling and professionalising the teacher force, *Norms and Standards for Educators* (DoE 2000b) was an attempt to make pedagogic labour visible, and to spell out the competencies required of teachers. The document spells out seven roles and the associated competencies required of teachers.

One of the roles required of teachers is the 'community, citizenship and pastoral role', which includes the following competencies:

- Being able to respond to current social and educational problems, with particular emphasis on the issues of violence, drug abuse, poverty, child and women abuse, HIV/AIDS, and environmental degradation. Accessing and working in partnership with professional services to deal with these issues is also important.
- Counselling and/or tutoring learners in need of assistance with social or learning problems.
- Demonstrating caring, committed and ethical professional behaviour and an understanding of education as dealing with the protection of children and the development of the whole individual.
- Understanding key community problems, with particular emphasis on issues of poverty, health, environment and political democracy.
- Understanding the impact of class, race, gender and other identity-forming forces on learning.
- Understanding formative development and the impact of abuse at individual, familial and communal levels.

Norms and Standards for Educators blurs the boundaries between what it is that a teacher is required to do and be, and the functions that are best taken up by other professionals who have expertise in things such as abuse and violence (social workers and psychologists, for example), the impact of class race and gender (sociologists) or counselling (psychologists).

Let us examine the importance and impact of these three documents. *White Paper 6* places a large responsibility for the care of vulnerable children with the school. It requires that special structures be established to undertake the

work of identification, monitoring, support, training and capacity building regarding vulnerable children. *Tirisano* and the *Norms and Standards* documents blur the boundary between school and community, and between teacher and other professionals. The school is required to be open to the community, and the teacher is required to be and do a number of things outside of the conventional purview of 'teacher'.

Where does the notion of schools and teachers taking on new and different roles come from? How has their function come to be explicitly defined as including the care and support of vulnerable children? These questions are taken up in the next section.

Schools as sites of care and support

The notion of schools as sites of support for vulnerable children as presented in the policy review above is set against a much broader, global imperative to find ways of addressing the needs of children in distress. Starting in 1997, the Children on the Brink series of reports outlined five strategies for supporting orphans and other children affected by HIV/AIDS. These primarily revolved around strengthening children's environment and capacity to meet their needs. These strategies were endorsed by the UNAIDS Committee of Co-sponsoring Organisations in November 2001. Notable amongst these was the need to strengthen schools and ensure access to education, an issue of particular relevance to education ministries and their education partners. Conventional concepts of school roles and functions were challenged, and the idea that schools could operate solely as centres of learning was questioned. New approaches that included components of care and support for vulnerable children needed to evolve within the education system.

Further iterations to this commitment to the plight of orphans and vulnerable children in the context of HIV/AIDS include *The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS* (Unicef et al. 2004) and the *WHO/ILO/UNESCO Consensus Statement on AIDS in Schools* (Unicef 2004), which added to the urgent call for education systems to respond to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

It was in this context that the notion of 'schools as nodes of care and support' took hold in South Africa. In particular, civil society (and especially NGOs)

began to focus on the school as a site for support of vulnerable children. In the hearts and minds of many development practitioners, schools held the key to the alleviation of the crisis that faces children who are orphaned by HIV/AIDS, are affected by the disease in other ways, or are vulnerable as a result of other causes.

Further, it increasingly appears that initiatives focused on school-based interventions to support vulnerable children have gained favour with grant-making organisations. In particular, those agencies concerned with education rights see the focus as an effective means of reaching children in need and guaranteeing a number of their legal entitlements.

Several substantial documents signalled the entrenchment of the conception of schools as caring and supportive places for vulnerable children in South Africa. In particular, the review by the Mobile Task Team at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Health Economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division asserted that social protection was 'an integral function of education's mandate' (Badcock-Walters et al. 2005: xiii). The review report also made a strong argument that HIV and AIDS would intrinsically affect the 'role of education, organisation of schools, planning and management of the education system and donor support for education' (2005: x). The report cited Zambian educationalist Michael Kelly, who makes the same point in an emotive exhortation:

> Going further, so that we see the salience of the school as a multipurpose community development and welfare centre from which the community action on behalf of prevention, care, support, and impact mitigation would be energised, co-ordinated and driven, is an even greater challenge. Avoiding these challenges is a recipe for a bleak future. Confronting them promises hope. (Badcock-Walters et al. 2005: xiii)

Another important body in the growth of discourse around schools as supportive contexts for vulnerable children is the Children's Institute, an NGO located at the University of Cape Town, which asserted that schools were key institutions 'through which access to and delivery of much needed services to children could be strengthened' (Giese 2003: 3). Like other children's advocacy and intervention organisations, their work resonates with the government policies outlined above which aim to strengthen and promote service delivery through schools and create schools which are 'centres of community support'.

However, while suggesting an expanded role for schools, the Children's Institute were more circumspect as to what schools were able to take on, and also asserted that the core function of schools, teaching and learning should not be undermined through introducing these expanded roles. Not all projects and documents are as sober or realistic in their approach to schools, believing that schools hold promise as a 'social vaccine for HIV/AIDS' and as potential sites of a wide range of community interventions.

There is a significant amount of policy and legislation that advocates for schools supporting vulnerable children on paper, as well as a vast number of advocacy documents. There is also a proliferation of programmes in schools to make these notions a reality (see Hoadley 2006 and Badcock-Walters et al. 2005 for reviews). What is it about schools that drives the conviction that they are the ideal settings for addressing the needs of vulnerable children? A number of factors are identified in the literature which point to schools as crucial points of leverage for assisting vulnerable children. Schools are often the most stable and best resourced institutions within communities, with a level of infrastructure that makes them amenable to broader community use. Schools are focused on children, and the system in South Africa as a whole reaches approximately 12 million children and young adults (DoE 2007). Children spend a significant amount of time at school over many years. Schools represent places where children's vulnerabilities are potentially identified, and possibly remediated, and they also represent key spaces in which large numbers of children can be accessed.

There are three problems with this construction of schools as sites of care and support for vulnerable children. The first pertains to the context of implementation of these policies; the second to their resourcing; and the third to the policy visions of teachers and learners and the way in which schools, teachers and communities are conceived of in programmes.

In relation to the first of these issues – the contexts of implementation, to what extent are our schools able to take on additional roles? What is the current state of our system? The question is considered in relation to the large-scale research base on South African schools.

Contexts of implementation: The research base on the state of South African schools

Schools in South Africa are struggling to meet their current educational mandates in their three core functions: teaching, learning and management. A recent study on teacher workload shows that most of the teaching time in a school day is crowded out by other functions and duties that teachers are required to perform. On average, teachers spend only 46% of formal school time on teaching and learning, and in some schools teachers were found to teach as little as 10% of the time (Chisholm et al. 2005). Recent research into learner performance shows a crisis in student performance with the vast majority of students failing at most levels of the schooling system (see Kanjee 2005, for example). In the comparative international testing programme in mathematics and science, Timms, South African grade sixes performed the lowest out of 50 countries (Reddy 2006). Additionally, in the Unesco Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (Saqmeq) testing, South African learners perform among the worst in relation to six other sub-Saharan African countries, including those with lower GDPs per capita (Van der Berg & Louw 2006). Finally, a recent ministerial review of school governance shows that school management lacks the capacity to fulfill the functions allocated to them (DoE 2004).

At a systemic level education is failing. But at the level of the institution, or school, there are also a number of specific problems that arise in the identification, support and monitoring of children experiencing vulnerability. Poor schools are overcrowded and often poorly resourced. Teacher absenteeism is known to be high. The construction of schools in the policy documents bear little relation to the many different kinds of cultures that exist and make schooling tick over in hard times. In many instances, the school environment actually contributes to children's vulnerability. Studies on violence and sexual abuse in schools (Brookes et al. 2004; Human Rights Watch 2001; USAID 2003) indicate that many schools have established cultures that represent significant threats to children.

The construction of communities and their relation to schools is also problematic. Albeit qualitative, the work of Wilson et al. (2002) points to a number of issues we know to be true of many schools. Teachers often have poor knowledge of children's home circumstances, and there is mistrust between

teachers and caregivers, often exacerbated by circumstances surrounding the non-payment of school fees. Furthermore, there are low levels of attendance amongst caregivers at school meetings (sometimes because meetings are used as forums to put pressure on caregivers who have not paid school fees) (Wilson et al. 2002). Teachers often have low levels of knowledge about services at their disposal. There are insufficient people or organisations to whom orphans can be referred for assessment or support, and there is insufficient integration of other services, such as social and health workers, into the education system (Wilson et al. 2002).

Given the mandate that schools have been given in policy, and given the constraints in the system, what happens when an implementing agent attempts to use policy to create a supportive environment for children in schools? In the next section I consider some of the problems that arise in this context in relation to the resourcing of policies. The case study of a project running in the Free State highlights some of the problems of the misalignment between policy directives and ideals, the reality of conditions in schools and the resources to implement these policies.

The resourcing of policy: The Kind Schools Project

In response to the demand to support vulnerable children in schools, the Life Skills Department of the Free State Department of Education (FSDoE) obtained funding from the Nelson Mandela Foundation and contracted a group of NGOs to assist in implementing the Inclusive Education Policy. Central to this policy, as stated above, is the establishment of site-based support teams (SBSTs). The FSDoE found in the proposed Kind Schools Project the possibility for implementing the policy more effectively, and extending their support to vulnerable children. The Project has three central 'pillars': establishing SBSTs who write action plans for vulnerable children in their schools; placing two youth facilitators who identify and support vulnerable children and report to the SBST in schools; and forming children's groups where groups of about 20 learners are encouraged to adopt and befriend other children who may be in need.

At the level of the school, the idea is that each school has an 'action plan' which specifies the focus and plan of action regarding orphans and vulnerable children in the school. The project's intention is to support and strengthen the

establishment and functioning of the school's SBSTs. The co-ordinator of the SBST is identified as the person to manage and monitor the work of the youth facilitators. The youth facilitators in turn oversee children's group activities. In order to gain buy-in from the school, and to honour participatory decision-making, the precise function of the youth workers beyond children's groups is decided by the school.

The Kind Schools Project was, at the time of writing, being implemented in a pilot phase in the Thabo Mofutsanyana municipal district of the Free State province. The area includes the former homeland Qwa-Qwa, an area identified nationally as a poverty node. Thabo Mofutsanyana is characterised by high levels of unemployment, HIV/AIDS and other social problems, including alcohol abuse and violence. Because there is very little economic activity in the area, many adults seek work in towns and cities away from their homes, and child-headed households are common. According to the author's field notes, the population in the district is approximately 700 000.

Documentation of the Project (Hoadley 2007) shows a number of problems with its implementation. In general, youth facilitators in schools are poorly managed, insufficiently trained and have tasks and functions unrelated to vulnerable children. In other words, schools use the youth facilitators to meet their immediate needs. Those schools which faced the most challenges – where teachers were out of class during learning time, which were physically in a state of disrepair and which showed other signs of mismanagement – were the schools where the project had the least positive impact. These were also the schools where the highest number of vulnerable children were concentrated. In short, schools lack the capacity to take on the additional management of the youth facilitators.

The Kind Schools Project, as described above, has actively framed its intervention in terms of national and provincial priorities, and has sought in every way to align what they are doing in schools with what policy seeks to achieve in relation to orphans and vulnerable children. The Project has managed, albeit on a small scale, to make some important interventions in the lives of vulnerable children. In a more critical vein, what the project does do is highlight the paucity of resources, particularly in human resources, to implement the policy that government proposes. In addition, it highlights how in a resource-scarce context additional roles and responsibilities are given to schools, rather than giving them additional resources with which to

address problems. The resources most required would appear to be human resources.

Firstly, many of the schools lack the SBSTs that are required to manage youth volunteers and establish an action plan for vulnerable children. Because the legal requirement to establish SBSTs in schools has only recently begun to be implemented in schools, many of the schools have very weak SBSTs, or SBSTs that are not yet fully functioning or are not clear on their objectives and activities. The pressure for schools to establish these bodies also comes at a time when schools are coming to grips with sustainable school governing bodies, and (in the case of new Section 21 schools) developing capacity for taking on a range of new functions. The implementation of other new policies, including the new National Curriculum Statements, also compete for priority in schools. It would appear that in most schools the SBSTs and their functions are secondary to the core business of the school.

Secondly, the Kind Schools Project has struggled to gain and sustain the attention of the DoE and the district office of the DoE. There is a lack of capacity at the district level where district-based support teams and lifeskills facilitators are supposed to train SBSTs. The project has not managed to negotiate its agreements with the district so that they may be given priority. The DoE, likewise, has played no monitoring, management or oversight role aside from requesting an annual report. We have known since 2000 that the DoE lacks capacity in terms of personnel structures and programmes to implement policies for vulnerable children (Coombe 2000; Vally 2000), and at the time of writing little had changed in this respect.

Perhaps the most significant issue, however, is that youth facilitators who are unemployed, (generally unskilled) individuals taken from local communities, are asked to identify vulnerable children, refer them and engage in activities with them (including counselling). They are also expected to conduct home visits and negotiate with other social protection agencies such as the police, clinics and welfare. Although there have been cases of success in this endeavour, and incredible effort on the part of the volunteers, the project presents a prime example of using the poor to assist the destitute. There is a poverty of voice, of networks and of expertise to help vulnerable children in ways that make a lasting and crucial difference in their lives. What is ultimately required is not an overloaded teacher with divided attention, or a hard-working volunteer,

but rather a trained social worker or councillor. In the Thabo Mafutanyana district two social workers service 617 schools.

The observations from this case study echo those of Kendall and O'Gara from Malawi, Kenya and Zimbabwe. Their conclusion from case-study research was:

> The reality of education and schooling in the three case study communities is soberingly different than the rhetoric in international and state policy papers, where education plays a heroic role in the struggle against AIDS. The schools and educators here struggle to serve an increasing number of children with decreasing per-pupil resources. (2007: 16)

While resources, and the different types thereof, are of central concern in this chapter; what is also of concern is the policy constructions of schools and teachers. In the following section we ask 'What is a teacher?' and 'What is a school?' in order to identify not only what role the school is able to play in the context of AIDS and poverty, but also what role it should play.

Policy visions of schools and teachers

What is a teacher?

I have shown the difficulty of implementing policies for the protection of vulnerable children in schools, particularly those that relate directly to care and support. I do not intend to argue that schools do not have a role – the question is how that role is defined. What responsibility should the education sector in general, and schools and teachers in particular, carry with respect to the AIDS pandemic and caring for those who are affected? It is necessary at the same time to be realistic as well as firm about what educators are trained to do, where their expertise lies and where it should be strengthened. The teaching profession itself is experiencing a crisis. The erosion of the professional identities of teachers has attracted serious consideration (Hoadley 2002; Jansen 2001), and the need for the strengthening of teachers' instructional practice and professional identities has been stressed. The notion of proliferating teachers' roles and steering them into areas in which they are not expert and don't have training is particularly problematic at this juncture.

The *Norms and Standards for Educators* (DoE 2000b) has been subjected to extensive critique (see especially Shalem & Slonimsky 1999). This document 'inflates the work of teachers beyond the capacity of all but the exceptionally talented and obsessively committed' (Morrow 2005: 5). The policy's construction of multiple roles and competencies for teachers undermines their professional identity, and in practice creates unrealistic expectations, especially within the 'community, citizenship and pastoral role'.

Teachers' professional identities are defined first and foremost around teaching and learning. They view the identification, support and monitoring of vulnerable children as an additional and overwhelming task for which they are not equipped (Kendall & O'Gara 2007; Wilson 2002). In 2005 the HSRC conducted a national survey of 24 200 teachers for the Education Labour Relations Council on teacher attrition, morale and job satisfaction (Hall et al. 2005) – 60% of teachers reported that performing tasks not in their job description was a significant factor contributing to job stress. Furthermore, in a study of educator workload in South Africa, teachers reported that attending to learners' social problems significantly crowded out time for teaching (Chisholm et al. 2005).

The role of social workers or support personnel in schools is important. Unless we take the need for these additional personnel in schools with high concentrations of vulnerable children seriously, we risk spending a lot of money, time and effort organising people into new structures and around new roles that they are simply unable to take on. The question also arises as to how we create a climate of care in schools. One way of thinking about this is in terms of the often ignored intrinsic rewards to be gained from teaching – where teachers are confident and effective in what they do, and where they see real changes in students as a result of their efforts. It would seem likely that a culture of care and support would emerge where teachers value the teaching and learning that they do, and students and teachers see the value of their daily work. Research also shows that an ethic of care *is* already widespread in schools and teachers take on a pastoral function (Bhana et al. 2006; Hoadley 2005), but this does not necessarily improve the life chances of children in the long term, and teachers are generally not able to intervene effectively in the lives of children beyond the school where help is needed most. A culture of care and support should be created in relation to the central purpose of schools: teaching and learning.

What is a school?

What is privileged in this paper is the notion that the central function of a school is teaching and learning. In much of the literature and in project documentation around schools as nodes of care and support, is the idea that the boundaries between the school and the community should be blurred. This resonates with postmodern ways of seeing organisation boundaries as permeable and uncertain (Christie 1998). Many of the implementing agents for caring schools base their interventions not on research or on a coherent definition of the school. The interventions are, first and foremost, ideological. The belief is that the school as public institution should be there to provide services to the community, especially children, beyond teaching and learning. But this way of thinking about how to enhance community–school relationships is possibly flawed.

Another way of thinking about the relationship between the school and the community (especially troubled, violent communities) is to strengthen the boundary of the school so that it may create a safe space for children and young people in which they can engage in systematic, formalised learning. These boundaries, it can be argued, are especially critical where children are rendered vulnerable *by* their communities. These boundaries are temporal and spatial and constitute the practices of teaching, learning and the place called school (Fleish 2003). Fleish states:

> Boundaries are critical for fully functioning organisations and the individuals within them. They – the rituals, rules, formal social relations that constitute a system's boundaries – provide a form of containment, a 'mature' social defence for both teachers and learners. Boundaries are physical (e.g. the fences around a school, the walls of a classroom), temporal (e.g. the time school starts and ends, the existence of a timetable), psychological (e.g. giving attention to and engaging with another person), and sociological (e.g. the norms of a social group). Our awareness of the boundaries of a social system and how we respond to what happens at boundaries, are integral to our daily work and lives. (2003: 41).

School boundaries are also epistemological. The purpose of the school is to give 'epistemological access' (Morrow 1995) to students. This is access to school learning and forms of knowledge which can allow students to move from the here and now, the local and particular, to imagine alternate futures

and how they may be attained. This role is especially crucial for a child in a poor community with no access to a secure and predictable livelihood. Here lies the emancipatory potential of the school as conceived by Bernstein (1986). In his enduring concern with social justice and knowledge, Bernstein shows how school knowledge allows for the possibility of imagining other realities and to think things as they aren't. These meanings 'go beyond local space, time, context' and embed and relate the latter to a transcendental space, time and context' (1986: 182). The potential of such meanings is to create a new coherence, a vision and understanding beyond the immediate. Here lies the emancipatory potential for vulnerable children in poor communities – not to be confined to the local, but given access to learning that allows for thinking things as they aren't.

Can a child learn if the child is hungry, sick, cold or abused? In all likelihood, no. But the argument being made here is that it is not the job of the school or the teacher to see to these needs. It is crucial that they be met through the appropriate resourcing of schools and communities. It is a difficult balancing act: recognising that schools have a function in the context of the AIDS pandemic, while at the same time protecting their core function which is teaching and learning. It is worth bearing in mind that these debates are not restricted to South Africa. In the USA Milbrey McLaughlin points out:

> Schools have become responsible for many goals that society holds for its young people. And as any harried administrator or teacher will be quick to tell you, schools can't do everything to meet the needs of contemporary youth. Schools are often overloaded and under-funded as they tackle the job of preparing young people for the future. (2003: 18)

Discussion: Whose job is what?

To summarise: teachers are struggling to teach, students are failing to learn and school managers are battling to run efficient and effective organisations. Given these difficulties, it is clear that additional resources need to be allocated to schools if they are going to be able to provide support to vulnerable children. In the context of HIV/AIDS and a largely dysfunctional school system, additional roles, responsibilities and resources cannot be expected of schools. Instead, ways need to be found to *support* schools in becoming supportive of vulnerable children. In other words, we need to think about schools as sites

through which support may be offered, rather than conceiving of support proffered *by* schools themselves. It is the latter conception that predominates in the policy documents described above, as well as many of the projects attempting to implement these policies.

Many of these policies and programmes aim to 'organise the poor' (Richter 2005, personal communication), rather than offer service, support or resources. Rather than facilitate greater functionality of the school in relation to a number of core functions (especially that of teaching and learning), they demand new governance functions, new roles for teachers and an ever-widening ripple of responsibilities for school communities.

Some programmes do approach schools as effective vehicles through which to access children (for example, the Children's Institute Caring School's Project). Given their access to large numbers of children, schools are seen as points for referral to sectors which are positioned to provide resources and other forms of support. For example, Soul City and Absolute Return for Kids address the issue of accessing social grants through schools. In the Soul City project, the purpose is to use the school as a site for referral, and also sites for 'jamborees'. At a pilot for one of these jamborees in the Free State, the Departments of Social Development, Justice and Home Affairs attended an event on a Saturday, and local NGOs, CBOs and radio stations also lent support. About 9 000 people attended the event and 2 500 people were processed for social grants by the DoSD in a single day.

Much more could be done to reach those poor households not yet accessing the Child Support Grant, the Care Dependency Grant or the Foster Care Grant. In addition to these grants, there are various other programmes to provide housing, water, sanitation, electricity and subsidised education to previously disadvantaged communities. However, these programmes are characterised by huge shortfalls and remain inaccessible to many poor children and their families. Some of the most pressing difficulties include transport costs, lack of documentation such as birth certificates and identity documents, administrative corruption and inefficiency, means-test confusion, and lack of knowledge of rights and redress mechanisms.

The argument presented in this chapter is that the needs of vulnerable children cannot entirely be laid at the door of the school. We need to think more carefully about exactly how vulnerability impacts on children and how best

to intervene. For example, it is widely understood that vulnerable children are particularly susceptible to absenteeism and dropout. We need to take seriously the possibility that those most in need of support from the school may often not be at school. We also need to think where the most appropriate intervention may be made to assist these children. Recent research has shown a strong relation between improved school attendance (the primary effect of vulnerability on children's schooling) and income transfers to the home (Samson et al. 2004; Case et al. 2005), even to children in the home who are not direct beneficiaries of the grant (Budlender & Woolard 2006). Policy needs to pay attention to allocating the right functions to the appropriate agencies.

Thinking through the questions of different sectors and their responsibilities might help to clarify where co-operation is most needed, at both local and national levels. The school as a site for *reaching* children in order to facilitate access to other social services is crucial. There is also a need for effective interface between the school and other sectors, as well as between the school and the homes and communities of students. But beyond the school as a site for referral, we need to understand clearly what effect vulnerability has on children's schooling, and the extent to which these effects can be addressed directly by the school. Giving the most vulnerable access to services by those adequately trained to offer them is an urgent priority.

To reiterate, while other agencies can offer children material, psychological and social care and support, no other can provide children with the crucial access to learning that a school offers. This epistemological access remains children's fundamental right, to be pursued *especially* if they are vulnerable. And it can only be pursued if the teaching and learning work of schools and teachers is protected and prioritised.

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10 Education and poverty: Development policy options in a democratic era

Simeon Maile

The Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Service (PCAS) reported in 2006 that between 2000 and 2005 poverty had declined by approximately 5% in South African rural areas, and increased by the same percentage in urban areas (PCAS 2006). The report also pointed out that according to 1995 and 2000 income and expenditure survey figures the rural share of income poverty[1] had declined by 5% and increased by 5% in urban areas. The report asserts that in 1995, 28% of households lived below the estimated datum line of R322 per month, calculated on the basis of expenditure, while the figure for 2000 was just under 33%. Furthermore, the report points out that the average household size declined substantially and the dependency ratio decreased from 3.5 in 1996 to 3.4 in 2002. It was also reported that access to social assets such as electricity, piped water, sanitation and telecommunications had improved, but the situation was still desperate for poor households.[2]

Studies generally agree that income poverty is declining. However, they also agree that inequality is widening. These findings are consistent with PCAS's (2003) report which investigated poverty holistically. It attempted to evaluate the extent to which government had achieved its objectives. This report points out that the government has made enormous strides in deracialising social services, introduced a strong welfare programme to address poverty and improving delivery of social services.

It is important to note that the studies referred to above used income as the main variable to arrive at the conclusion that poverty was declining. In this chapter I argue that this is a narrow approach, and that we cannot draw broad conclusions about poverty declining. A study by the Oxford University Index Team (2000) argues that poverty is a multiple deprivation from employment, health, housing, education, skills and training. Measuring (Bradshaw & Sainbury 2000; Woolard & Leibbrandt 1999) and defining (Hulme et al. 2001; Magasela 2006; Preece 2005) poverty is not easy. Poverty also has many meanings for government and other concerned parties. This lack of consensus

on meaning, definition and measurement deepens the discourse on poverty, and also divides it. On the one hand, government utilises income to define poverty and to claim that it is decreasing. On the other, research (Simkins 2004; Stats SA 2000; Terreblanche 2002) argues that the quality of life of the majority of South Africans has deteriorated and the depth and severity of poverty has increased. Poverty is therefore a contested political concept.

The main argument of this chapter is not about lack of consensus in definition and measurement. Most people will claim that their understanding of poverty is the correct one, based on logical argument or scientific research. As I have pointed out, poverty is a contested concept. Like Alcock (1993), I argue that poverty is an unacceptable state of affairs. We need to do something about it. The analysis focuses on theories and policy trajectories directed at improved understanding of government efforts aimed at poverty eradication. But first I will discuss how poverty impacts on education. This is followed by a theoretical analysis of development conjunctures and a discussion of how the DoE is responding to poverty.

Education and poverty

Education as deprivation domain

Research (Noble et al. 2004) holds that there is a close link between educational attainment, the type of work an individual is engaged in and associated earnings potential. The level of education an individual achieves determines both current income and savings potential as well as future opportunities for individuals and their dependents.

At the time of writing the government is intent on rectifying the disadvantages in education which stem from the apartheid system. The National Register of School Needs Survey reveals that there are still wide disparities, with the greatest challenges existing in the poorer rural provinces.

I previously indicated that we should not think of poverty in a narrow context, equating it with absolute lack of income. We need to define poverty in broader terms of social justice or deprivation. A multidimensional understanding of poverty helps define poverty as a human condition characterised by the sustained choices, security and power necessary for enjoyment of an adequate

standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights (Preece 2005). Poverty is thus seen as a subjective experience, an issue of participation and human asset; and as a structural deficit which requires a multi-agency response, in which education can play a part.

Can education reduce poverty?

It is universally accepted that education can lift people out of poverty. In 2000 achievement of universal education became one of the eight MDGs, which are providing countries around the world with a framework for development as well as time-bound targets by which progress can be measured. Education is seen as central to development in this context. It empowers people and strengthens nations. It is a powerful equaliser opening doors to all to lift themselves out of poverty (Agenor et al. 2004; UNDP 2006).

Education promotes economic growth, national productivity and innovation.[3] Investment in education benefits the individual, society and the planet as a whole. Good quality education is the most powerful instrument known to reduce poverty and inequality (Appleton 2001; Fields 1999; Teal 2001). With proven benefits for personal health, it also strengthens economic health by laying the foundation for sustained economic growth. For individuals it is the key to creating, applying and spreading knowledge.

Research (Block 2007; Marini & Gragnolati 2003) shows that individuals with higher levels of education have improved health and nutrition. The World Bank (2006) argues that inequalities in income, health and educational outcomes remain a challenge in many developing countries. These inequalities arise from unequal opportunities that are both intrinsic and accompanied by profound differences in influence, power and social status. The Economic Commission for Africa (2005) reports that health inequalities affect vulnerable groups such as women and children in Africa. Life expectancy is low among the poverty-stricken groups, and child mortality remains high. Research points out that low levels of education and literacy, combined with insufficient income among women, have a direct correlation to high infant mortality, morbidity (rates of incidence of a disease) and HIV-infection rates among women. Education thus plays a vital role in eradicating human development problems (Lopi 2004). It may also be the single most effective weapon to combat HIV/AIDS.

Education drives economic competitiveness. An educated and skilled workforce is one of the pillars of a knowledge-based economy. Increasingly, comparative advantages among nations come less from natural resources or cheap labour than from technical innovations and the competitive use of knowledge. Studies (Checchi 2006; Filer et al. 1996) link education to economic growth. These studies argue that education contributes to improved productivity, and that productivity leads to higher income and improved economic performance.

Research also points out that education has synergistic, poverty-reducing effects. It can vitally contribute to the attainment of the MDGs. Education also helps to promote democratisation. Countries with higher net enrolment in primary schooling, and a smaller gap between rates of boys and girls' schooling, tend to enjoy greater democracy. Democratic political institutions such as power sharing and open, fair elections are more likely to exist in countries with higher literacy rates and education levels.[4] Researchers concur that education helps to promote peace and stability, which are preconditions for poverty reduction. Peace education covers issues of human security, equity, justice and intercultural understanding. All these are vital for poverty reduction.

Education and social capital: Making the investments needed to end poverty

Sachs (2005) points out that the key to ending extreme poverty is to enable the poor with development opportunities which in most cases elude them. He argues that the development ladder hovers overhead, and the poorest of the poor are stuck beneath it. Sachs points out that the reason the poorest of the poor are trapped in poverty is that they lack the minimum amount of capital necessary to get a foothold, and therefore need to be empowered to get up to the first rung. He identifies six major kinds of capital that the extremely poor lack:

- Human capital: The necessary health, nutrition and skills for each person to be economically productive.
- Business capital: The machinery, facilities and motorised transport used in agriculture, industry and services.
- Infrastructure: Roads, power, water, sanitation, airports, seaports and

telecommunications systems that are critical inputs into business productivity.

- Natural capital: Arable land, healthy soils, biodiversity and well functioning ecosystems that provide the environmental services needed by human society.
- Public institutional capital: The commercial law, judicial systems, government services and policing that underpin the peaceful and prosperous division of labour.
- Knowledge capital: The scientific and technological know-how that raises productivity in business output and the promotion of physical and natural capital.

The main question is how to overcome a poverty trap? This question is particularly important because the poor start with a very low level of capital per person, and find themselves trapped in poverty because the ratio of capital per person declines from generation to generation. Checchi (2006) analyses this problem by using the concept of intergenerational persistence. She argues that it can be concluded from empirical evidence that the children of educated parents are more likely to acquire education. She points out that this may be due to parent imitation, but in most cases it happens because of induced educational choices. Checchi points out that intergenerational persistence derives from liquidity constraints. For example, if access to education is limited by family financial resources and acquired education provides access to higher-paid jobs, this opens the door to a poverty trap – poor families are prevented from investing in the education of their children by lack of financial resources and the inability to access financial markets, their children remain uneducated and poor, and they are unable to invest in their grandchildren. Therefore, from an empirical point of view, if we measure intergenerational persistence within the section of the population, we can derive an approximate indication of the extent of intergenerational persistence.

In South Africa intergenerational persistence can be seen in territorial segregation, and is related to family wealth. Better schooling and an empowering socio-economic background yield greater social capital, thus providing a clear advantage to children raised in that environment (Checchi 2006; Gustafsson 2006; Van der Berg & Burger 2003; Van der Berg & Louw 2006).

From this discussion we can conclude that social capital is the missing link between the poor and the rich. Preece (2005) argues that social capital represents the intangible bonding elements of mobility that create opportunities and pathways of exiting and entering poverty traps. It can be empirically demonstrated that the relationship between education and social capital can be effective in liberating the poor from poverty. Sen (1999) explains this by defining poverty as a state of being incapable. He argues that poor people are incapable because they lack knowledge and skills for participation in economic life. For Sen the poor are poor because of the effect of inadequate schooling and inadequate curriculum on the labour market. A schooling system which does not provide liberation from poverty condemns children to perpetual poverty.

Theorising about South Africa's development trajectory

The legacy of apartheid

The legacy of apartheid in the field of education is well documented in research. Apartheid has left the country with an education system that is characterised by fragmentation, inequity in provision, a crisis of legitimacy and, in many schools, the demise of a culture of learning as well as resistance to changing the way things have been done in the past.

One of the most visible legacies of apartheid is the complete fragmentation of the education system – there are four separate sub-systems for the Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) states, six for the self-governing territories (Gazankulu, KaNgwane, KwaNdebele, KwaZulu, Lebowa and Qwaqwa) and several administrations scattered throughout the country for whites, coloureds and Indians. In effect, 17 education departments were created under the apartheid regime. In many cases, one or two departments were responsible for schools in the same area, resulting in inefficient management and use of resources. Generally, the apartheid system deliberately failed the poor with regards to access, quantity and quality.

Apartheid led to an education system characterised by racial, regional and gender inequality. Neglecting the quality of African education led to the disintegration of learning environments and the demise of a culture of learning and teaching in many black schools. This was exacerbated by the

curricula which had little relevance to the students. In African schools, the inadequate supply of resources, low qualifications and poor morale of teachers created despondency and apathy. Students and schools in rural areas were, and still are, the hardest hit. Education in black schools has been characterised by high repetition and dropout rates.

Oldfield (2001) points out that the legacy of apartheid impels the state to act developmentally. Acting developmentally requires that the state reconstruct education and training for the benefit of individuals, the community and collective development. As a key national project, education policies on the curriculum and school governance, as well as on teaching and training, have been rewritten. To give effect to these policies, parliament has passed a host of legislative and policy measures to reconfigure educational structures at all levels of the education system (district, provincial and national). Despite this, inequities in accessibility and the quality of educational experience persist, and broader problems of transformation and delivery plague the state.

The state's role in development

In the process of constructing and implementing solutions to transformation, the state's role in development has, as Oldfield (2001) puts it, rotated in orientation. This rotation has altered the development process from one of prioritising reconstruction and redistribution through state intervention to one of facilitating the delivery of social services beyond the ambit of state responsibility.

Macroeconomic policy

The state's rotated orientation can be seen in the analysis of its macroeconomic policy. Three post-apartheid state documents – the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), the RDP (1994) and the GEAR programme (1998) – illustrate the rotation in orientation of the state's role. I will briefly examine the implications of each of these documents.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

The Constitution enjoins the state to provide for its citizens. The state accepts responsibility for basic education, housing, healthcare, sufficient food and water, social security and freedom and security from all forms of violence for all citizens. Motala and Pampallis (2001) caution us that provisions of the Constitution cannot be understood without an historical analysis contextualising its evolution. The Constitution is an expression of the struggle against apartheid, the need to establish a culture of human rights in the country, the struggle for social and economic rights, and the moves to universalise the principles of fairness and justice. State provision for socio-economic rights mirrors the traditional role of the welfare state. According to Edigheji (2007), this orientation resonates with the aspirations of the majority of South Africans who were stripped of their humanity and dignity by the apartheid regime. Consequently, the majority of South Africans expected that democracy would respond to their aspirations of a better life, which is synonymous with freedom from hunger, poverty and disease.

The Constitution represents pragmatic politics by providing people with 'bread and butter' (Goodin et al. 1999). Economically, it makes sense for government to improve human capital and provide poor people with more purchasing power because it stimulates demand in the economy. The Constitution enables the state to promote economic efficiency, reduce poverty, promote social equity, promote social integration, avoid social exclusion and promote stability.

There is broad consensus that these issues need to be integrated in government policy. In this way, the state is concerned with problems other than those of maintaining law and order. The state's activities are interlocked with the market's and the family's role in social provision (Esping-Andersen 2006).

The RDP

RDP documents build on a strong state with power and capacity to redistribute resources to the disadvantaged. Motala and Pampallis (2001) point out that the RDP establishes a number of core principles which are based on the need to redress the historical legacies of colonialism, racism, apartheid, sexism and repressive labour policies; income distribution that was racially distorted; and segregation in access to social services. The RDP is a people-driven policy

document embracing the notion of nation building and the necessity to link reconstruction and development. It entrenches the state's central responsibility in the provision of education and training. It invokes democratic educational practice in policy implementation and places an emphasis on redress to uplift the disadvantaged. The RDP agued that no society could sustain political democracy if people are poverty-stricken, without land and deprived of tangible assets for a better life. Attacking poverty was therefore the first priority of the government.

RDP principles are associated with a high degree of state intervention, where the state increases the provision of social service to promote equity. It intervenes in the economy, through expansionary monetary and fiscal policy, in order to promote growth and eliminate poverty. Therefore, the RDP can be described as a mixed economy with centralised state intervention. Since the RDP required an integrated system, education policies were inherently consistent with macroeconomic policies, and this had certain implications for policy.

A tremendous amount of state resources have been required in order to meet the goals and objectives of the RDP. Fiscal policy requirements needed to be increased, with more expenditures allocated to education and training, health, the provision of social services and welfare. Increasing state expenditure was also necessary to comply with RDP objectives. Inevitably, government consumption and investment expenditure increased. Enhancing equity implied increases in transfers to poorer households in addition to debt. Theoretically, an RDP environment would require large increases to the education budget (especially in the form of capital expenditure) to provide classrooms, media centres, electrification, water and other sanitary services, and telephones. Moreover, the RDP advocated equitable expenditure per student and an increase in the number of teachers so that there would be fewer students per classroom. Expenditure on child feeding schemes, further education and training (FET) and adult basic education and training had the inevitable effect of raising the total education budget requirement (Nicolaou 2001).

There has however been a shift in RDP principles and the RDP White Paper emphasised fiscal discipline. The Department of Finance (DoF) had a mandate to decrease public deficit and at the same time not allow any real increase in public expenditure. Fiscal discipline and reduction in public expenditure became the new focus of government, the argument being that increased

expenditure cannot generate growth. The White Paper digresses from being a form of centralised government intervention in a mixed economy to a framework of government intervention. This new focus ushered in GEAR, which embraces fiscal discipline and reduction in public expenditure. Nicolaou (2001) argues that the shift arose from influence emanating from international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and various consultancies.

GEAR

Fiscal discipline and deficit reduction are prominent features of GEAR. The adoption of GEAR marked a decrease in centralised government intervention and it resonates with the IMF and World Bank's structural adjustment programmes which advocate fiscal discipline, liberalisation of international markets, reduction of public expenditure and privatisation.

GEAR represents what should be happening. In an environment with grave racial, social and gender inequalities, it is not possible to rely on the market to engender equality. Nicolaou (2001) argues that market mechanisms can only promote equality if it already exists. Structural adjustment programmes operate from assumptions of well functioning, equilibrium-attaining markets. This is not the case with South Africa. A developing country like South Africa requires state intervention in order to create a platform for equality.

Advocates of the GEAR programme argued that it would generate economic growth in the order of 6% per annum, allowing for a 3% increase in the provision of social services (Simkins 2004). It compels the government to remain firm on fiscal discipline. In education, a higher enrolment rate has been achieved under the GEAR programme, but the issue of quality of delivery remains a challenge. At the time of writing, the lack of funds for schooling facilities, teachers, training, books and media centres was severely hindering the success of the curriculum. One of the impacts of GEAR has been the reduction of educational subsidies, thus promoting greater private provision. Inequalities in education are thus left to market forces, and the users' fee system reproduces unequal education in which the elite benefit, while the majority languish in mediocre public schools. Inequalities are likely to be reproduced if state intervention is not increased.

With GEAR, however, increased state intervention is not possible. Part of GEAR's 'strict fiscal discipline' entails a reduction of expenditure on education. Hence, in the 1997/1998 fiscal year, the provincial government deficit was R6 198 million (Motala and Pampallis 2001). This led to the rationalisation of staff in education and health services and the quality of education was severely compromised. Even if the state enforced the principle that no student may be turned away, students in most public schools, particularly in rural areas, do not have the option of attending better schools.

The DoE's response to poverty: A policy of perspective

The link between public spending and poverty reduction

Budget allocation is a key instrument for governments to promote economic development and reduce absolute poverty. This role has become even more prominent as South Africa recommits itself to poverty reduction. Public spending has the potential to affect growth and poverty in two ways. Firstly, it can raise the overall growth performance of the economy; and, secondly, it can increase the chances of the poor to contribute to the growth process, mainly by strengthening human capabilities and reducing transaction costs (Wilhelm & Fiestas 2005). The critical challenge is to strike the right balance between spending that focuses primarily on growth and spending that aims at reducing poverty. We need, however, to note that it is difficult to quantify the impact of public spending as its effects are complex and may vary depending on the composition of growth, policies and regional conditions.

What is guiding public allocation of spending in education?

It can be argued, from the discussion above on macroeconomic policy, that public-spending allocations are guided by the macroeconomic policy and the development path a country has chosen. However, a deeper analysis of GEAR, with its emphasis on fiscal discipline, reveals that state revenue and national income play a significant role in determining actual expenditure. If there is an increase in GDP, it follows that there will be an increase in education expenditure. Conversely, if there is a decline in GDP, expenditure in education will be smaller. This happens despite the greater need for social redress and

improvement in education. Declining investment in education compounds social backlogs and defers development to future allocations.

GEAR ensures that expenditure implications are accommodated within a sound macroeconomic fiscal framework, consistent with the division of responsibilities between national, provincial and local government – this is known as the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). MTEF represents a process of budget-rolling over three years. This approach entails a clear setting of objectives, both in the medium term and on an annual basis. It links national and other levels for strategic planning. MTEF is the primary tool for a multi-year approach to fiscal planning. Its purpose is to contribute to achieving consistency between the government's macroeconomic, developmental, social and other commitments. The MTEF aims to:

- Provide access to future financial implications of departmental policies and spending programmes.
- Provide an instrument for evaluating policy alternatives.
- Enable spending agencies to plan ahead with greater uncertainty.
- Assists Cabinet in evaluating policy options and setting expenditure priorities.
- Contribute to fiscal and financial planning and policy formation.

The microeconomic and fiscal policy targets of GEAR provide a point of departure for the development of strategies and objectives regarding government expenditure. Inputs and compilation of the MTEF are co-ordinated by the DoF and the Treasury. This involves co-operation with provincial treasuries. Provincial budgets vary in size, while spending patterns are similar across provinces. Education is the largest item in provincial budgets, accounting for between 35 and 40% of spending. This pays for primary- and secondary-school education, as well as special education, teacher training and FET colleges. The bulk of provincial education funds go to teacher salaries.

The DoF is guided by human capital needs in deciding on budgetary allocations. It sees itself as an agent of change in a developmental state with the role of fighting poverty and expanding economic opportunities for the poor (Manuel 2004).

Assessing the MTEF

The MTEF is a derivative of GEAR. It respects the RDP objectives, but sets fiscal discipline as the superseding objective. Its major critique is that it yields inflexibilities and uncertainties. The forecasting procedure for the MTEF requires assumptions to be made regarding economic growth rate, which determines the size of national income for each of the three years. Moreover, assumptions about unemployment need to be made. Based on these assumptions, it is possible to estimate the size of state revenue, state expenditure and the fiscal deficit.

The MTEF is a form of framework intervention in a mixed economy. The private sector has to intervene where the state fails to provide goods and services. This represents a more decentralised, marketised form of state intervention. The MTEF, with its stringent adherence to fiscal discipline, has built-in inflexibility and does not allow needs-driven budgetary adjustments.

The equity funding policy framework

Overview

Post-apartheid South Africa inherited an education system characterised by racial inequality and segregation. After 1994 it was necessary to redress past injustices in educational provision, and provide high-quality education to all. Advancing democratic transformation requires an equitable way of deploying resources so that far-reaching and structural change can occur in order to address existing imbalances in the education system and contribute to the eradiation of poverty and ensure economic well-being in society.

To deal with inequalities persisting in the education system, the DoE (2000) emphasised that priorities would focus on redress and quality. The DoE argues that the South African education budget has inherited an unequal schooling system. To deal with equity issues, new funding norms for schools have been introduced since 1996. The DoE committed to directing 60% of its non-personnel and non-capital recurrent expenditure towards the most deprived 40% of schools in the nine provinces. This means that 20% of the most endowed schools receive only 5% of available resources (DoE 2000). In addition, all learners were to be provided with a minimum package of

teaching and learning materials, and poor parents were to be exempt from paying school fees. The goal of achieving racial equity and redress has been at the core of reform expenditure patterns. The budget is reallocated to less resourced provinces and to predominantly black schools.

Norms and Standards for School Funding (NSSF)

The NSSF, which came into effect in April 1999, ensured that poorest learners received seven times more non-personnel funding per head than the least poor learners in a province. It was believed that this would contribute to intra-provincial equity. The NSSF follows a similar provision by the South African Schools Act (Sasa) (No. 84 of 1996) which allows parents of learners from poor households to apply for exemption from paying school fees.

Roberts (2003) reveals that this policy links with public expenditure to address development needs and enable South Africa to attain the goal of reducing poverty and increasing development outcomes in education. The issue of school fees has been a barrier for children from poor households. In a detailed report, the DoE established that there was substantial difference across race groups in payment of school fees. The vast majority of black (93.4%), coloured (86.6%) and Asian (80.5%) respondents reported paying more school fees. Private and former Model C schools were out of reach for most black, coloured and Asian learners (DoE 2006). It is clear that children from these groups are less likely to be able to access these schools due to their lower average income levels.

With the NSSF, the state gave effect to equitable funding to ensure that the rights of children from poor households are recognised, and to redress past inequalities in educational provision. The NSSF emphasised targeted expenditure for redress, equity and quality. It introduced new systems of budgeting and spending for schools. According to NSSF, the MEC for Education does not budget allocations for provincial education departments (PEDs). This has now become the responsibility of provincial governments and legislature, which must take appropriations to their education departments from the total revenue resources available to their provinces. Thus, each province determines its own level of spending on education in relation to its overall assessment of needs and resources.

The NSSF also provides guidelines for fee charging and exemption in public schools. Sasa imposes a responsibility on all public school governing bodies to raise funds for schools to supplement state funds. It encourages less poor parents to increase direct financial contributions. Sasa does not interfere with parents' discretion unreasonably. Ironically, this has worked to the advantage of middle-class and affluent parents (who generally happen to be white, given the legacy of apartheid). Schools in affluent regions charge high fees to raise funds for a wide range of cultural and sporting facilities and to enable them to recruit additional staff. The high fees place quality schools out of the reach of poor households.

On the other hand, schools in the former homeland areas have contributed to the building, upkeep and improvement of schools through meagre funds. These schools suffer the legacy of large classes, deplorable physical conditions and absence of learning resources. These schools are, however, expected to achieve the same level of learning and teaching as their counterparts in affluent regions. This led the NSSF to introduce targets for school allocation as shown in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1 establishes target-per-learner amounts for school allocation. The second column shows the percentages that underline pro-poor funding; for example, the first national quintile of learners should receive 30% of funding – six times more than the 5%, which should go towards the least poor quintile. The no-fee threshold row indicates the per-learner amount that government considers minimally adequate for each year.

The intention of the policy is to treat equally-poor learners equally, regardless of the province they find themselves in. It takes into account province-specific data provided in Table 10.2.

Table 10.1: Targets for school allocation

	Pro-poor funding (%)	2007		2008		2009	
		Target alloca-tion per learner per year	Learners who could be exempt from fees (%)	Target alloca-tion per learner per year	Learners who could be exempt from fees (%)	Target alloca-tion per learner per year	Learners who could be exempt from fees (%)
National quintile 1	30.0	R738	100	R775	100	R807	100
National quintile 2	27.5	R677	100	R711	100	R740	100
National quintile 3	22.5	R554	100	R581	100	R605	100
National quintile 4	15.0	R369	67	R388	67	R404	67
National quintile 5	5.0	R123	22	R129	22	R134	22
Overall	100.0	R492	89	R517	89	R538	89
No-fee threshold		R554		R581		R605	

Source: DoE 2000

Table 10.2: National poverty distribution, by percentage

	National quintiles					
	1 (poorest)	2	3	4	5 (least poor)	Total
Eastern Cape	34.8	21.6	21.0	11.6	10.9	100
Free State	30.8	14.9	20.1	18.8	15.4	100
Gauteng	10.5	11.4	27.4	27.2	23.6	100
KwaZulu-Natal	24.2	18.8	25.6	17.3	14.1	100
Limpopo	34.0	22.3	24.9	11.6	7.2	100
Mpumalanga	16.7	20.2	29.8	19.9	13.5	100
Northern Cape	26.3	17.7	21.6	14.8	19.6	100
North-West	22.7	15.2	30.5	20.5	11.0	100
Western Cape	6.5	8.0	23.1	27.7	34.6	100
South Africa	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	100

Source: DoE 2000

Table 10.3: Learners in national quintiles 1 and 2, by province (2007)

	National quintile 1 %	National quintile 2 %	Learners in no-fee schools (%)
Eastern Cape	34.85	21.58	56.43
Free State	30.83	14.90	45.73
Gauteng	10.46	11.44	21.90
KwaZulu-Natal	24.19	18.76	42.95
Limpopo	33.96	22.34	56.30
Mpumalanga	16.68	20.17	36.85
Northern Cape	26.28	17.69	43.97
North-West	22.70	15.24	37.94
Western Cape	6.54	8.02	14.56
South Africa	20.00	20.00	40.00

Source: DoE 2000

Table 10.3 indicates the government's allocations to the poorest two quintiles per province, which comprise 40% of schools, and whereby preference is given to the poorest schools.

School fees and free education

The DoE maintains, in its plan of action, that no poor school should need to charge school fees, and that no parent should be charged school fees that are unaffordable (DoE 2003a). The department commits itself to improved funding for schools, even if school fees are not collected, and it is determined to relieve schools from the pressure to charge fees. However, it must be noted that the government does not believe that a complete ban of school fees with better public funding is the solution.

Schools in national quintiles 1 and 2 are obliged to seek DoE approval for charging school fees. Those in other quintiles can charge fees at acceptable levels based on the government's analysis of the financial situation in those schools. Government argues that if a school's fees can be lowered without impacting negatively on learner performance, then that school's fees will be regarded as being too high. Parents are encouraged to distinguish between reasonable and excessive school fees.

Parents paying fees for more than one child are also supposed to receive rebates. The new policy provides relief for parents (especially single mothers) who are likely to be poor. Additional costs such as school uniforms are also added to the school fees. This creates a problem for poor parents. Consequently, the DoE (2003b) introduced guidelines to reduce the cost of school uniforms so that uniforms do not become a deterrent for attendance and participation in school programmes. The policy rationalised an extensive range of uniform options, and limited the number of uniforms required.

The DoE (2003a) provides that households receiving welfare grants on the basis of poverty should be granted exemption from school fees. This invokes the role of social workers and community development workers employed by the state. These programmes are important in addressing the poverty-related problems experienced by the poorest of the poor in the education system. The DoE needs to promulgate these actions into policy provisions.

The School Nutrition Programme (SNP)

Nutrition programmes have been in place in South Africa since the 1960s, but have not been very effective in reducing malnutrition for a number of reasons. The programmes focused primarily on providing food to the needy and thus only addressed the immediate causes of malnutrition. They did not address the underlying causes and today malnutrition is still a problem in our country.

In August 1994, South Africa's new Minister of Health appointed a committee to develop a more comprehensive nutrition strategy for South Africa. The outcome was the production of the Integrated Nutrition Programme (INP). The INP is different from past nutrition programmes in that it emphasises the need to address all causes of malnutrition and stresses that all sectors need to work in an integrated manner in order to alleviate this problem.

Malnutrition is a serious problem in South Africa and is one of the biggest contributors to childhood illness and death. It is estimated that about 30% of South African children are stunted from lack of adequate nutrition in the early years of their lives (Gauteng Department of Education 2004). Inadequate food intake, illness and psychosocial stress/trauma are the most significant immediate causes of malnutrition. Poverty and lack of resources are basic factors that contribute to it. The DoE's INP has attempted to deal with this

epidemic in a number of ways. However, on 1 April 2004 the programme was transferred to the Gauteng Department of Education (Gauteng Department of Education 2004).

At the time of writing, the Primary School Nutrition Programme was being implemented at specifically identified sub-economic schools. This scheme runs jointly with the DoE. The provincial government aims to reach 125 000 children at 847 primary schools in the province by 2004 with its school feeding programme (Gauteng Department of Education 2004).

The SNP is another mechanism of the government's integrated development programme which contributes to learner achievement and the alleviation of poverty. The SNP was funded to the tune of over R838 million in 2004/2005, enabling the programme to reach five million learners in 1 600 schools (Gauteng Department of Education 2004).

With regard to reviewing the efficiency and effectiveness of spending on the SNP, Wildeman and Mbebetho (2005) find that:

- Under the supervision of the DoH, the SNP was subjected to declines in funding since its inception. The declines reflect poor funding prioritisation of a very important public policy.
- Highly variable and inefficient actual spending patterns characterised the programme until around 2001. This directly reduced the overall effectiveness of the programme in serving poor learner communities.
- The absolute number of participating schools declined by 15.4% over the period 1995 to 2004, and the participation of schoolchildren dropped by 29% over the same period.
- High expenditure ratios in 2004/2005 appear to reflect growth in beneficiary numbers, which is partly the result of inherited inefficiencies and partly due to revisions to inherited databases by provincial education departments.
- Differences in targeting practices between education and health prior to 2004/2005 caused the same primary school to be treated differently by health and education poverty-targeting strategies. This weakened the overall impact of spending and reflected poor interdepartmental communication and co-operation.

Conclusion

Literature review has revealed that South Africa is winning the war on poverty reduction. Current research utilising income indicates that poverty is declining, and that net enrolment has increased. It would therefore seem that South Africa is on its way to achieving its MDGs. This has taken place because of a set of policies and programmes that were deliberately introduced to address MDGs. Government policies are focused on addressing poverty and education. Although there are some weaknesses, as mentioned previously, the strength of the current policies is in addressing the plight of the poorest of the poor.

Notes

1. Poverty is defined relative to the standards of living in a society at a specific time. People live in poverty when they are denied an income sufficient for their material needs and when these circumstances exclude them from taking part in activities which are an accepted part of daily life in that society. The most commonly used way to measure poverty is based on incomes. A person is considered poor if his or her income level falls below some minimum level necessary to meet basic needs. This minimum level is usually called the 'poverty line'. What is necessary to satisfy basic needs varies across time and societies. Therefore, poverty lines vary in time and place, and each country uses lines which are appropriate to its level of development, societal norms and values.

2. These conclusions are drawn from studies such as Ardington et al. (2006); Basic Income Grant Coalition (2003); Bhorat, Naidoo and Van der Westhuizen (2006), Hoddinott et al. (2000); Leibbrandt et al. (2006); Van der Berg (2007); and Van der Berg et al. (2005).

3. See, for example, Arndt et al. 2006; Baye 2006; Bhorat, Hanival and Kanbur 2006; Checchi 2006; Filer et al. 1996; Ianchovichina and Karker 2005; Page 2006; Psacharapoulos 1994; Rodriquez 2000; Teal 2001; and Welch 1970.

4. See, for example, Chauvet and Collier 2004; Cooke 2001; Dahl 1999; Hossain et al. 1999; Levin and Dollar 2005; Moore and Putzel 1999; Osborne 2006; Torres and Anderson 2004; and Varshney 1999.

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11 Poverty, unemployment and education: Strategies to address the disservice of modern development

Reynold Sonn

Introduction

South Africa's formal baptism as a democracy in April 1994 received international approval and recognition, which to this day serves as a model for other countries undergoing difficult and expanded political transitions. However, the greater struggle since the early post-apartheid days has perhaps been the attempt to undo the economic legacy of the system of racial exclusivity. Alongside the political evaluation and praise, therefore, there has been a strong local research programme aimed broadly at measuring the changes in well-being that occurred in the post-1994 era. In addition, a number of studies also concentrated on measuring the performance of government in meeting its stated objectives of reducing poverty, inequality and unemployment (Kingdon & Knight 2004).

As is generally accepted and agreed upon, the primary objective of economic policy is to improve the material welfare and the quality of life of the population of a country. A sure way of achieving this objective is through high-quality economic growth, which ensures that an increasing number of workers are gainfully employed. South Africa has undergone a fairly successful political transition. Unfortunately, the political miracle has not been followed by an economic miracle. Although, at the time of writing, the economy was set for a sixth-year positive economic growth and the business cycle has moved into a renewed recovery phase since June 1993, poverty and unemployment are still rife and deteriorating (Demombynes & Ozler 2006). The living conditions of the poor and unemployed, of whom the majority are black, remain desperate.

Poverty and unemployment: Disservices of modern technology

Poverty is characterised by the inability of individuals, households or communities to command sufficient resources in order to satisfy a socially acceptable minimum standard of living (Donald et al. 1997). Poverty is perceived by poor South Africans to include alienation from community, food insecurity, crowded homes, usage of unsafe and inefficient forms of energy, lack of jobs that are adequately paid and/or secure, and disintegration of the family (Mdladlana 2005). Unemployment is perceived as a lack of opportunity to use oneself in a meaningful way that contributes positively to one's existence or survival. If a person is idle (not working) because no opportunities exist whereby one can make a meaningful contribution to one's physical existence, then one does not need, or have any use for, democracy. How can we expect such a person to be involved in taking care of their secondary needs when he/she is incapable or disempowered by modern developments in terms of taking care of basic needs? This is perhaps why Mpako-Ntusi (2002) refers to such a situation as the disservice of modern developments.

There was a time when families worked collectively to meet the survival needs of each member. Natural resources, human intellect and sheer physical energy were adequate ingredients and life was good. Human intellect coupled with some social conditions however drove human beings to want to make life better (Mpako-Ntusi 2002). This drive saw some changes such as the move from subsistence farming to economic farming and the home manufacturing of goods to industrial manufacturing. Urban centres emerged where people were concentrated, and industrialisation and technological developments improved quality of life for most people. Indeed, good intentions paid the expected dividends (Mpako-Ntusi 2002). Needless to say, natural resources were depleted in the process and great damage was caused to the environment. Pollution and other unanticipated consequences of industrialisation and urbanisation surfaced, and most developed countries were caught unprepared. While either ignoring this problem or acknowledging it and doing nothing about it, technological developments escalated even to the point of displacing urban employees as the mechanisation of large-scale economic farming coupled with the mechanisation of manufacturing industries made employees redundant.

The consequences of all this is that rural families that used to depend on subsistence farming and home industries were now unable to use available land and their own intellect and physical energies to produce food. Land is often no longer arable, or the climate no longer conducive. Coupled with this, there is global warming, extreme weather events such as tornadoes, unpredictable season changes, insufficient grazing and water for livestock, and even the threat of theft (Mpako-Ntusi 2002).

Urban industries that have benefited from modern technological developments no longer need the large hordes of workers that used to service them. Machinery is preferred for its reliability and loyalty as trade unions are seen as an additional threat to undisturbed productivity. Neither the under-developed rural areas nor the developed urban areas have work opportunities for the majority of able-bodied persons willing to use their human intellect and their physical energy in the meaningful provision of resources for their own survival. Hence the high rate of unemployment and poverty. Are these not the unanticipated consequences of good intentions that Mpako-Ntusi (2002) refers to? Are these not the disservices of modern developments?

Several terms have been fabricated to describe these situations and different causes and effects have been advanced. Unemployment and different forms of poverty are a global scourge. Both developed and under-developed countries are grappling with these contemporary social issues and poverty datum lines have been calculated and circulated. Some countries are more affected than others. Instead of conditions getting being better with time, things are getting worse at different rates.

As has been alluded to earlier in this chapter, there is no doubt that much has changed in the daily lives of ordinary South Africans since 1994. A liberal constitution guarantees the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and movement; the rights to education, life and health; and makes provision for an independent judiciary and democratically elected government which seeks to provide employment for all those who want to work and improve their quality of life. The government is committed to creating an environment in which South Africans can feel safe and secure while they get on with the task of living in a society which has outlawed all forms of discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, language or any other means. The political inheritors of the old South Africa have rightly established themselves as the champions of the marginalised in our young democracy.

In spite of all these impressive attempts to improve the daily living of all the people of South Africa, the living conditions of the poor and unemployed, of whom the majority are black, remain desperate. At this point, it is worth considering the words of the former Ambassador of South Africa to the USA, Harry Schwarz (1993) who once declared that 'poverty corrodes freedom'. If democracy is something that can be implemented by persons who are said to be free, how free are people who are too poor to implement democracy? If one is disempowered by circumstances and cannot freely use your own intellect and physical energy to provide for your survival, how can you be expected to have the power to make choices at a national political level? If one is incapable of taking care of your own basic needs (food and shelter), how can you be expected to exercise a political right which meets secondary needs of nation building? Is it not a matter of unanticipated consequences of good intentions – the disservice of modern development?

Education and poverty

Allow me to share a poem by Venezuelan poet, Luis Alberto Machado, translated in 1995, for a letter that was sent to then President Nelson Mandela by Marilyn King of the Context Institute, Venezuela:

Praise to education

Damn you!
You were conceived to perpetuate privileges
You are the instrument of oppression

The children that die, die because of you,
And you are to blame for all their failures.
You are the cause of poverty

You should be the threat to power, but you disturb no one.
Because you make the young become old.

Teaching is subversive
But teachers lack weapons.

Oh, Education…!
If you were to do what you have to do…

You would be killed.

But don't wait!

And within the womb of every mother Let the revolution begin.

The last few lines of the letter read:

It can be done!
The Democratisation of Science.
The Democratisation of Science for the democratisation of Intelligence.
The Right to be Intelligent.
The revolution of Intelligence.

According to this poem, education has failed the poor. It is not difficult to see why. If one looks at the aims of education proposed by Apple (1990), one gets a clear picture of the extent to which education has failed the poor. According to Apple, education should:

- Provide people with the useful minimum marketable skills necessary to take their place in society.
- Equip people with skills needed for seeking further knowledge for themselves.
- Provide people with a vocational training that will enable them to be self-supporting.
- Awaken in people a taste for knowledge.
- Train people to use their critical faculties.
- Help people to appreciate the cultural and moral achievements of humankind.

As we are all aware, the education system failed most South Africans on the aforementioned aims. The pre-1994 phase especially hampered the black majority as far as these aims are concerned because the curricula were said to be bookish and oriented towards a higher level of education, which was beyond the reach of the majority of the pupils, as well as divorced from the life and culture of the local people and consequently unsuited for preparing children for life in their own communities. The methods of teaching were said to be examination-centred, authoritarian and restrictive, failing to produce original thinking or problem-solving ability on the one hand and genuine commitment to the service of the community on the other. It is said that the

education system is responsible for the profound divide between the educated elite and the masses.

For centuries the poor have seen white schoolchildren completing their school and university careers successfully and becoming increasingly mobile in our society. The upward mobility of whites in general (and white Afrikaners in particular) was backed by the skewed distribution of massive amounts of state capital and other resources to the benefit of a relatively small minority of the country's citizens. The education system was indeed used to assist the government to level the playing fields for white Afrikaners belonging to a white minority in order to form part of the ruling class within a short period of time. As the years went by, significant numbers of Indian and coloured people also started benefiting from the system which ensured that economic power remained in the hands of an elite group of the population (Meerkotter 2001).

As internal and external pressure started mounting against the racist policies of the apartheid government, many in positions of political and economic power started talking about the idea of building a black middle class which would not only side with the elite groups in the country but, indeed, become part of the economy, continuing to exploit the labour of the poor. What makes things more complex in South Africa is that we do not have sufficient economic wealth to pacify the majority of citizens by providing for their daily needs, which not only means food, but also housing, healthcare and infrastructure such as access to water, electricity and transport (Meerkotter 2001).

New policies and White Papers have changed the educational landscape since 1994. A great deal has been done to rectify the inequalities of the past, but it must be pointed out that the backlog with regard to appropriate school buildings, qualified teachers, suitable trained administrators and school facilities in general is so enormous that it would take years, even decades, to expect of the great majority of our schools to function adequately. There are still learners who go to school under trees without the necessary resources to acquire skills to compete with those who come from more privileged backgrounds. It is ludicrous to expect of someone who lives in a shack without running water, electricity or sanitation, who is cold and wet in winter and does not have one decent meal per day, to cope in school, even if the school building is sophisticated. What meaning could such a building, with teachers often living under completely different circumstances in comfortable homes, have for the learners, as well as for their (in many instances) unemployed

parents? One cannot deny that even in the most depressing circumstances some people manage to survive and build quality personal lives that might in all respects be second to none, but, frankly speaking, the contradictions are too large if we analyse the situation realistically. This, I believe, is the reason for Machado proclaiming: 'Education…you are the cause of poverty' (and, may I add, unemployment).

Poverty and unemployment reduction strategies

The role of the government

In the ninth century the Islamic scholar Qutayba wrote:

> There can be no government without an army
> No army without money
> No money without prosperity
> And no prosperity without justice and good administration.

In analysing this quotation I came to the following conclusion: the government depends on the armed forces to ensure security. To maintain the army, the government needs resources, which it can derive only from prosperity and development. Prosperity and development depends in turn on justice and good governance. Good governance can be identified with building roads and keeping them safe for travellers and traders, building irrigation works to make farmers more productive, assuring honest weights and measures, resolving disputes justly and protecting the poor and weak by providing them with shelter and food. The government must create a civil society free of oppression, atrocity, discrimination and violence based on the rule of law, social justice and the protection of human rights and dignity; and ensure the fundamental rights and freedom of the people, especially the poor and unemployed.

It is therefore essential for government to eliminate extreme poverty and hunger in South Africa. The vision and aim of government should be to build a liberal market economy in which all South Africans can participate productively. To do this, government must develop an enabling environment for the private sector to generate legitimate profits and pay reasonable taxes,

thereby enhancing public revenues that can then be invested in public services with the view of reducing poverty and unemployment so that all South Africans can live in dignity. It is important for government to focus on those areas that enhance current and future productivity, including electricity production, well-maintained roads, irrigation, and institutional and human capacity building, and thereby create sufficient jobs and protect the rights of the poor. As government targets investments in these areas, policies must be put into place to support likely areas of accelerated economic growth, including rural development (agriculture and rural industries).

To alleviate the plight of the poor and the unemployed government should:

- Expand access to primary and secondary education, increase enrolment and retention rates, and strengthen the curriculum and quality of teachers.
- Build a well-managed and internationally recognised system of higher education that responds to South Africa's growth and development needs.
- Develop an effective skills development system that is responsive to labour market needs.
- Extend the basic package of health services which will form the core of service delivery in all primary healthcare facilities and promote a redistribution of health services by providing equitable access, especially for the poor.
- Extend the essential package of hospital services in rural areas to improve the quality of care at secondary and tertiary healthcare levels.
- Implement a health-sector human-resource management programme in rural areas to improve the appropriate selection, appointment and management of trained health professionals.
- Link social grant beneficiaries to opportunities for economic activity. In the past the government's poverty alleviation measures and social assistance programmes were not specifically designed with exit strategies for beneficiaries, other than a change in their living circumstances and income levels. Consequently, an intolerable proportion of able-bodied poor South Africans, including care-givers of children receiving the Child Support Grant and those with disabilities capable of rehabilitation, continue to face particular barriers to entering into, remaining in and progressing in employment. The labour market has not been equally responsive to the increasing demand for work opportunities, especially from the social-grants beneficiary population. It is important to build a

gateway to improve the impact of policies and extend government support through incentives for individuals to participate in self-development programmes; and for business to adsorb such individuals into their labour force and civil-society collaboration.

What is being asked for is for government to work towards a competitive economy which creates sufficient jobs for all its people; a redistribution of income and opportunities in favour of the poor; a society in which sound health, education and other services are available; and an environment in which homes are secure and places of work are productive.

The promotion of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs)

Various programmes and institutions have been established to give effect to the strategy of promoting SMMEs. The following are a few examples:

- The Small Business Centre attached to the Department of Trade and Industry.
- Khula Enterprise whose main objective is to ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises are supported on a sustainable basis, while emphasising assistance to marginalised and disadvantaged groupings of entrepreneurs. Khula has also announced a comprehensive support programme for NGOs in financing small business.
- The Development Bank of South Africa with its focus on the provision of infrastructural services such as water and sanitation, telecommunications, transportation and the financing of up-and-coming entrepreneurs.
- The Industrial Development Corporation, focusing on industrial and manufacturing development.
- The National Housing Financial Corporation, a wholesaler of housing funds.
- The Land Bank, whose main focus is to fund agricultural development.

Of course, there are many more initiatives that were implemented by the government to assist SMMEs, but they are too numerous to name. Indeed, all commentators on economic affairs are positive in their evaluation of our economic policy and the assistance of SMMEs. However, if we are realistic and pause for a moment to evaluate the situation in South Africa there is little evidence of growth and development. The poor remain poor and the unemployment rate is still very high. The question is: How can one seriously

believe that real growth and development has taken place if during a period when average per capita income have risen we know that inequalities between groups have increased; when we see massive expenditure upon luxury goods by a minority at a time when the majority are barely able to survive; when new hospitals and schools are being built in our towns and cities which already have far more such facilities than exist in the rural areas; and when even within towns and cities unemployment is rife, law and order is not maintained, and corruption in public life goes unchecked? Violent crime has become part of our society and this has had a great impact on business functioning and business confidence. Crime statistics in South Africa bear witness to this fact. The most frightening problem in South Africa is that it is mainly comprised in the so-called 'baby boomers' age category – ages 14 to 24. South Africa is therefore sitting on a 'youth time bomb'. Unless drastic action is taken immediately, this situation could plunge our country into anarchy as large groups of youths have no family tradition, no religious framework, no ethical values, little education, and no work experience. This is a grave threat to the stability of our country and to the reduction of poverty and unemployment.

Further education and training (FET) colleges

The Minister of Education at the time of writing, Naledi Pandor (2006), recently called for FET colleges to become institutions of 'first choice' for young people. The DoE (2006) has embarked on recapitalisation funding of colleges, which provides a much needed national impetus for renewal.

Pandor (2006) stressed the intention to build and sustain a well designed, responsive set of FET institutions that offer flexible programmes. The minister outlined plans to develop a new FET curriculum in 13 critical sectors identified by the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA). These plans balance fundamental skills (reading, writing, calculating and informationl technology), theory, applied theory and workplace experience. The new curriculum, which has to be phased in from the beginning of 2007, will be a significant departure from colleges' current National Education Department courses (the N1–N3 certificates that have been criticised in the past for being outdated and obsolete) and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)-type programmes.

Minister Pandor (2006) proposed four models of professional development for FET colleges:

- A 'college–university partnership' model of professional development. The suggestion was that a national institute for FET-college professional development should be established in a reputable university of technology with the remit to kick-start the process. As the process gains momentum, responsibility can be devolved to a number of regionally based professional development units, which are independently situated but premised upon close working partnerships between universities and colleges that reflect joint ownership and involvement of both institutional types and simultaneously cater for the DoE and Department of Labour (DoL).
- Strengthening of relations between DoL and FET colleges in the roll-out of learnerships. The suggestion was that the strengthening of relations between DoL and FET colleges would improve learnership. The minister highlighted the important role and contribution to be played by FET colleges in the National Skills Development Strategy and re-emphasised the central vision for FET colleges of becoming a seamless interface between basic schooling and workplace learning as well as a bridge to higher learning. She emphasised the vision that FET colleges should become the automatic and first choice of young people in any community to become skilled workers in any occupation.
- The role of linkages and programme units in enhancing the responsiveness of FET colleges and the employability of their learners as they proceed to the working world. The minister stressed the point that FET colleges are diverse and do not act uniformly, determined instead by the historical and external socio-economic factors that shape their identity, the distinct organisational ecology of the college, and the current curricula resources of colleges and the curricula needs of external stakeholders.
- A fourth model that was proposed by the Minister was the organisation and effectiveness of pilot marketing and communication units in colleges located in metropolitan, urban and rural settings. Given the legacy of the past, she suggested a wide range of approaches; for example, diverse strategic marketing priorities, provincial visions, college resources and leadership approaches. It was recommended that FET colleges need to strategically determine which model is most suitable for adoption in their own institutional context, but that the question of available resources is fundamental to the sustainability of the units.

If these new proposals for FET colleges are correctly implemented, it is the author's view that positive progress will be made in addressing the issue of unemployed youth.

The Sustainable Skills Development Project of Walter Sisulu University (WSU): An initiative in partnership with Niagara College in Canada

The Sustainable Skills Development Project (SSD), implemented by Niagara College (NC) and the former Eastern Cape Technikon (ECT), now Walter Sisulu University (WSU), is a 901Z Category 1 project administered by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC). This five-year project started on 1 April 2003 and ended on 31 March 2008. The SSD builds upon a previous CCPP project on the Business and Technology Enterprise Centre that was also implemented by NC and the former ECT between 1997 and 2001.

The goal of the SSD project is to build strategic partnership networks in education, government, industry and the community in order to support poverty reduction through skills development and increased access to income and employment in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa. Through these partnerships, WSU will increase its contribution to regional economic and social development through the implementation of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) by creating competencies in addressing local labour-market shortages as identified through research initiatives in accordance with the provincial skills development plan.

The core purpose of this initiative is to develop an integrated and sustainable skills development system within WSU that will position the institution to develop industry-based training strategies that link education and training to work, enhance individuals' skills and facilitate their access to income through formal sector jobs, small and micro businesses, and community projects.

The following project results are anticipated:
- Institutional development of models and partnerships for education and training services.
- Recognition of the institution as a regional education and training centre for workplace skills training, programmes and learnerships, and entrepreneurship training.

- Increased ability of the institution to source income-generating funds through government, industry and international partnerships.
- Capability of the institution to support NSDS institutional education and training needs.
- Strengthening of the institution's capacity to meet Eastern Cape workforce and entrepreneurship needs through the support of provincial and national education and training policies.

By entering into such a partnership with NC, WSU is able to reposition itself as a institution with sustainable business linkages to respond appropriately to business opportunities and brand WSU as a preferred institution for partnerships with both the public and private sectors.

Conclusion

South Africa is an upper-middle-income country, but despite this relative wealth, the experience of most South African households is of complete poverty or continuing vulnerability to being poor. The distribution of income and wealth in South Africa is among the most unequal in the world, and many households still have unsatisfactory access to education, healthcare, energy and clean water. This situation is likely to affect not only the country's social and political stability, but also the development path it follows. Countries with less equal distributions of income and wealth tend not to grow as rapidly as those with more equitable distributions.
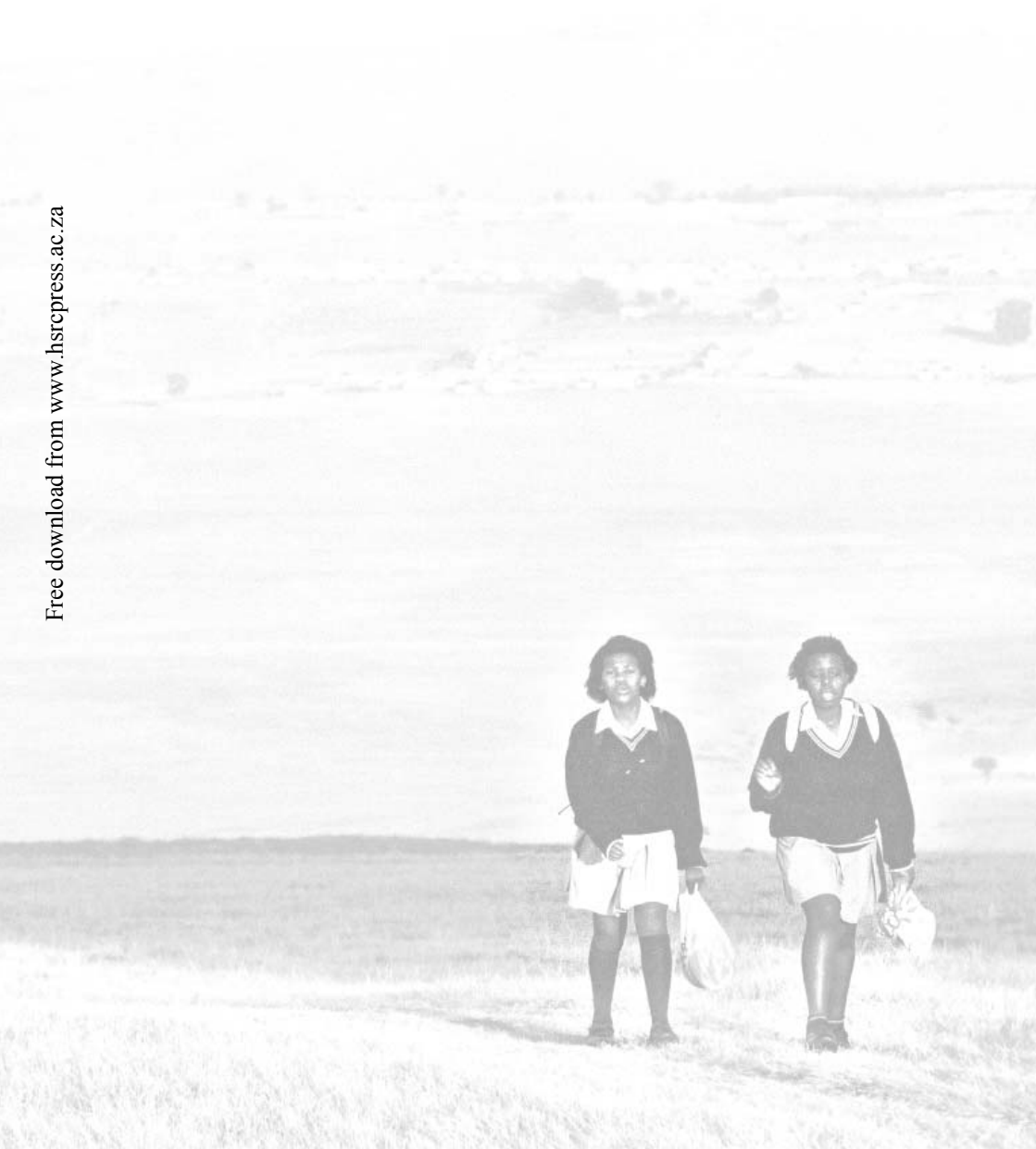
If political leaders are able to reorganise total populations into war machines in times of mass conflict and senseless destruction, one would think it possible to organise a nation at war with poverty, unemployment and crime into working towards peace, reconciliation, self-respect and jobs for all.

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SECTION 4:
Lessons and case studies

12 Skills development for poverty reduction: Can FET colleges deliver?

Salim Akoojee and Simon McGrath

The importance of Further Education and Training (FET) colleges in responding to the skills development needs of South Africa has been well documented (Akoojee et al. 2005; Cosser et al. 2003, McGrath 2003a; 2003b). Government has repeatedly emphasised the significance of the sector in providing the intermediate skills required in the country. At the time of writing, the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, at a DoE/HSRC conference declared that:

> …colleges are central to our agenda of developing skills…It is our intention to build and sustain a well-designed set of institutions, offering flexible programmes and ensuring that we have students qualified in critical skills. (Pandor 2006)

This commitment is an important one. Not only does it place colleges at the centre of the national skills agenda, it also establishes government commitment to its importance. As well designed institutions with flexible programmes (and delivery forms) presumably responsive to a target audience that goes beyond the traditional school-leaving youth component, the college sector is expected to appropriately respond to the critical skills agenda. An amount of R1.5 billion was made available in 2005 (DoE 2005a) and this was reportedly increased to R1.9 billion in 2007 (Pandor 2007). Funding of this kind gives substance to articulated commitments from the highest level of government.

Similarly the Ministry of Labour has, in its latest National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS II), argued for the central role of FET colleges in the delivery of sector-skills imperatives. Colleges have been earmarked to respond to these national skills development imperatives in creative ways, asserting their role as preferred providers for the delivery of skills between 2005 and 2010 (DoL 2005).

The articulated importance of the sector in the national skills development context means that there is potential for the sector to raise its profile. There is also a need for colleges themselves to seize the initiative to take their rightful place as a significant component of the national skills development agenda.

In addition, the ministries of Education and Labour agree that the colleges are intended to respond to an access prerogative and provide an avenue for youth and adults who are intent on securing access to the labour market. The potential of the sector to serve as an interface of national skills development provision as well as a redress opportunity for those denied skills provision in the past is evident. The Minister of Education reiterated this point at the Limpopo FET Colleges Conference:

> …colleges are not poor people's universities or places for other people's children; (there needs to be a) recognition that further education colleges will begin to provide the majority of our young people with solid foundations for meaningful careers. (Pandor 2005)

FET colleges are, therefore, intended to take their place, at least rhetorically, as meaningful places for career preparation and as appropriate sites of learning for employment or self-employment.

This chapter begins by establishing the envisaged role of FET colleges in the national development trajectory. This is followed by an analysis of the current form, context and challenges facing the sector in South Africa. It concludes by examining the potential and challenges facing the sector in the South African education and training framework.

The national development trajectory

The current socio-economic context in South Africa is underpinned by national development considerations of poverty, unemployment and inequality (Bhorat & Kanbur 2006; Woolard & Woolard 2006). The government has, since 1994, articulated the need to deal with some of these remnants of the apartheid racial order, but has found its efforts frustrated by a deeply entrenched and entrenching structural condition of inequality. Balancing the needs of those who have and those who do not in a deeply racialised socio-economic context makes the challenge that much more complex. In addition, the ravages of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and rampant crime are especially pressing. The

international neo-liberal context, which serves to reduce rather than expand the role of the state to deal with some of these challenges, makes the likelihood of success that much less likely. Despite the measures intended to deal with some of these challenges, the enormity of the task of engaging with some of them is not inconsiderable. Some of the macro socio-economic strategies are assessed in the next section.

The RDP agenda espoused by South Africa's first post-apartheid government in 1994 placed particular attention on responding to the socio-economic legacy. The change to the GEAR agenda in 1996 signaled a marked shift in government thinking about redistribution and placed considerable attention on the role of macro-economic stability in its pursuit for growth as a primary feature for development. This change had particularly serious impacts on government spending imperatives, social spending in particular, and on delivery of key services. Impacts on education included, inter alia, a reduction in absolute numbers of teaching personnel which were considered to be a significant element of education spending (Akoojee & McGrath 2004).

Assessments of both GEAR and the RDP have reviewed the role of both for macro-economic and social development. It has been suggested that, in retrospect, the RDP was neither so explicitly socialist nor GEAR so fundamentally capitalist as has been conventionally argued (Buhlungu et al. 2004; Gelb 2003; 2004). Indeed, in both these national strategies a commitment to both growth and equity as fundamental to social and economic transformation can be found. In an attempt to strike an appropriate balance between the two, there is an implicit understanding that the one is privileged over the other. The Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (AsgiSA) owes some of its genesis to the incomplete and partial success of the redistributive component of the previous RDP and GEAR initiatives. AsgiSA is clearly a significant feature of the current national developmental path. President Thabo Mbeki announced its launch in July 2005, ostensibly to assist in meeting the ANC's 2004 election pledges (ANC 2004); namely to: halve unemployment, halve poverty, accelerate employment equity, and improve broad-based black economic empowerment.

Particularly crucial to the AsigiSA was its espoused commitment to spending priorities, public infrastructure, private investment and skills development. While growth was crucial to the achievement of these goals, the centrality

of education and training to its achievement was paramount. The summary document for AsgiSA argued the following in this regard:

> For both the public infrastructure and the private investment programmes [AsgiSA priorities 1 and 2], *the single greatest impediment is shortage of skills* – including professional skills such as engineers and scientists; managers such as financial, personnel and project managers; and skilled technical employees such as artisans and IT technicians. (RSA 2006: 9, emphasis added)

The realisation that skills deficits are an important constraining feature of development is an important one and places the importance of education and training at the forefront of policy. It is significant that the strategy encompasses all levels of the education and training system, from schooling through to higher education and incorporating FET colleges. It identified the following in particular:

- Achieving higher levels of literacy and numeracy in the early grades of school.
- Doubling the number of mathematics and science high-school graduates by 2008.
- Upgrading career guidance.
- Upgrading public FET colleges.
- Expanding Adult Basic Education and Training (Abet) delivery.

The AsgiSA plan also introduced a new structure dedicated to skills development to drive this process: the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (Jipsa). Jipsa is led at the highest level of government, by the deputy president, and brings together ministers, business leaders, trade unions and educationalists to identify urgent skills needs in order to suggest quick and effective solutions (RSA 2006). In a speech at the launch of Jipsa, Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka identified the following as the key areas of skills shortage to be targeted:

- High-level engineering and planning skills for infrastructure development.
- City, urban and regional planning and engineering skills for local and provincial governments.
- Artisans and technicians, especially for infrastructure development.
- Management and planning skills in the social sectors and for local

government.
•   Teacher training for mathematics, science and English.
•   Skills for the priority sectors, especially in project management, general management and finance.
•   Skills for local economic development. (Mlambo-Ngcuka 2006)

Jipsa acknowledges that it intends to build on more than a decade of policy and institutional development in education and training, which incorporates key supply features incorporating schooling, further and higher education.

For FET colleges, Jipsa has identified the role of key developments. In addition to the merging of apartheid institutions, the recapitalisation programme and curriculum reform (implemented in 2007), the sector saw an injection of R1.9 billion into the sector to achieve the reorientation of the sector. The sector also incorporates the new skills development system, driven by the two National Skills Development Strategies (DoL 2001; 2005) and featuring a new vocational qualification (the learnership), a levy-grant mechanism and new Sector Education and Training Authorities (Setas). Jipsa intends to incorporate an overarching human resources development strategy, as proposed by the departments of Education and Labour in 2001 (DoE & DoL 2001), which was designed to co-ordinate the work of the two departments and other national and provincial departments.

This overall policy framework and the action plan implied by AsgiSA and Jipsa suggest an important role is envisaged for skills development which places colleges at the critical edge of the country's national skills development trajectory.

FET colleges are, therefore, considered crucial to the success of the current South African national development agenda and there is at last some consensus about the role of a sector which has been so racialised and gendered in the past. Thus, while it is still very evident that 'South African development policies are still profoundly shaped by the twin legacies of colonialism and apartheid and their shaping of a model of uneven and skewed development' (McGrath & Akoojee 2007), there have been some very real attempts to engage skill priorities under Jipsa. In addition, the legacy of polarisation between high- and low-skill elements leads to serious underdevelopment of intermediate skilling, considered to be key to industrialisation and competitiveness (Kraak

2003; McGrath 2004). Clearly, this is being done in the context of urgency to resolve immediate short-term skill needs in light of the immediate needs of the 2010 Soccer World Cup (to be hosted by South Africa) and the critical imperative urgency to develop appropriate infrastructure. The need to meet pressing deadlines for development of stadiums and associated infrastructural developments has placed skills development on the government's high-priority list.

Towards understanding the FET college sector: Salient trends

The FET college sector has been quite radically changed from its previous apartheid-defined structure. Since 1994, particular attention has been paid to, inter alia, the structural re-organisation of the sector in order that it might be deracialised and responsive to the new socio-economic context. Over 150 of the former FET institutions have been merged to 50 new entities, a process which has, at least technically, been successfully completed, although the changes have generally been complex (Adams et al. 2006). This has created a much more streamlined college establishment which should enable colleges to be flexible enough to engage the current skills development priorities. Although much has still to be done, especially in those sites located in areas neglected under apartheid, some promising trends are evident.

Enrolment

Enrolment at FET colleges is still lower than in universities and the former technikons comprising the Higher Education and Training (HET) sector, although some promising trends are evident over the last decade. Latest figures indicate that since 1999 the proportion of college enrolments has increased from 139 000 in 1999 to 144 000 in 2002 (Table 12.1), an increase of 2%.

It is interesting that this increase happened at a time of considerable upheaval associated with the restructuring of the sector. Admittedly, more needs to be done, with the current attention given to skills development priorities. This is still below the quite substantial increase in enrolment at universities (9%) and

Table 12.1: Post-school enrolment (1999–2002)

	Universities	Technikons	FET colleges	Total
1999	245 000	141 000	139 000	525 000
Proportion (%)	47	27	26	100
2002	295 000	151 000	144 000	590 000
Proportion (%)	50	26	24	100
% increase over period	9	3	2	6

Source: Adapted from Powell & Hall (2002; 2004)

technikons (3%). Colleges still comprise less than a quarter of all post-school education and training enrolment in the country.

Colleges have, however, been remarkably responsive to post-1994 learner demographics. The quite powerful demographic shift from 1992 to 2002 is evidenced by transformation of predominantly white enrolment to one that is now largely African. The African student component, which increased from 15% to 74% was replaced with a white proportional representation from 67% to 16% in 2002. This indicates that the 'second-class' status of colleges is being replaced with one in which there is a sense that they are an important avenue to secure skills which enable access to the formal labour market. There is an expectation that as more and more youth understand that the skills developed in these institutions can lead to employment (or self-employment), this can be improved.

Age profile

The FET sector in South Africa has traditionally responded to the post-school youth learner cohort. This is in contrast to some other countries which have been able to respond to the more mature adult learners as part of a response to globalisation's effect of encouraging re-skilling over the life course (DoE & DoL 2001). Furthermore, there is a realisation that little has been done with respect to adult education in the country (Mbeki 2007). As in some other countries (England, for instance) colleges have been considered an important avenue to provide opportunities for adults who have not been afforded skills under apartheid (Akoojee 2006).

In this respect, colleges have displayed an increasing awareness of the need to increase numbers of more mature learners. Figure 12.1 shows the increasing older (over 30) learner cohort between 1998 and 2002.

Figure 12.1: Age profile at FET colleges (1998–2002)
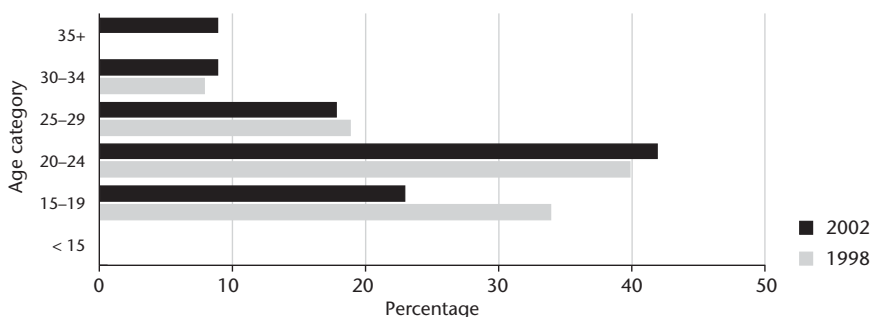
Source: Powell & Hall (2002; 2004)

This trend suggests that colleges are beginning to respond to lifelong learner needs in keeping with developments in other countries (see DoE & DoL 2001). This is promising in light of the DoL imperative to enable skills development for older (employed and unemployed) learners. Therefore, while the traditional clientele of colleges remain intact and (which is consistent with the DoE target market), colleges have already begun to respond quite effectively to the more mature learner set, despite not having been specifically required to do so.

Programme trends

Colleges are still dominated by provision in the fields of engineering and business, which comprise 90% of the total enrolment in the sector (Powell & Hall 2004). While this leaves space for more programme diversification, the existing enrolments in these fields are quite important in the light of the country's skills requirements. Indeed, recent economic developments (the rights to host the 2010 Soccer World Cup, for instance) and the much publicised skills deficiencies in municipal delivery mean that the skills that colleges are already engaged in providing are sought after. This suggests that

these priorities could meaningfully be inserted as strategic priority focus areas. Since municipalities are key in the achievement of these activities, it is counter-intuitive that some colleges have not as yet identified this sector as a partner in their skills development efforts.

The level at which programmes are delivered provides an important area which could be developed. Most enrolments (40%) are pegged for courses between N1 to N3 (Levels 2 to 4 on the National Qualifications Framework) with the majority of learners registered in 'engineering' (Powell & Hall 2004). In this respect, while the engineering learner numbers at lower levels are not matched at the post-N3 level where there is an enrolment of fewer than half that of the previous level, the trend shows that there is nevertheless a base from which to build. Programmes in the 'business' arena, however, are characterised by an opposite trend, with the post-N3 level enrolment estimated at almost four times that of the lower levels. This suggests that the skills developed in this area could be effectively re-targeted for public service delivery.

Partnerships enable colleges to be in touch with their labour-market constituency. A study by the National Business Initiative (NBI) showed that in 2002 there was a total of 1 852 linkages or joint projects between colleges and industry (Powell & Hall 2004). Most of the partnerships were with business (51%) and there were only a small number with Setas (3%). This is significant for a sector only recently introduced to the importance of linking up with their learner destinations. More recent evidence suggests that this is steadily improving (Danida 2006). There is, nevertheless, potential for development.

Indeed, evidence points to a robust 'learner placement' component of the partnership structure. More than 50% of partnerships with industry were directed at learner placements and 'training provision'. Another 50% of partnerships with government were related to community training, provision of training and work placement (DoE 2004). While this is encouraging, there is clearly a case for building on these and expanding current linkages by structural means.

There is, in addition, considerable space for partnerships to be developed in light of the skills development imperatives identified in the NSDS which has as its vision the development of 'skills for sustainable growth, development and equity' (DoL 2005). This will enable FET colleges to respond to the skills development needs of various groups, especially those considered to be

most in need (the post-school youth target market), while at the same time responding to the needs of older learners (the employed and unemployed and those needing to be re-skilled as a result of the changed political/economic circumstances). The very different target markets will enable the much-needed synergy with business and industry which many programmes are aspiring to. This needs to be done in conjunction with the allocation of much needed resources required to achieve necessary infrastructure upgrading to enable quality delivery. While the effects of recapitalisation are likely to be felt, there is a need to ensure that funding is sustained. It is to this aspect that we now turn.

Funding and governance

Governance funding is key to the success of the public college sector in engaging the skills-development priorities of the country. Indeed, if as Minister Pandor has stated, there is need for colleges to contribute to the more than 50 000 apprentices needed in the country between 2007 and 2010. It is essential to ensure that attention is paid to both governance and funding. President Thabo Mbeki in his 2007 State of the Nation address has placed this aspect on the education agenda of the country:

> The progress we have made with regard to the recapitalisation of FET colleges has created the possibility for us to significantly expand the number of available artisans. Starting this year, resources will be allocated to provide financial assistance to trainees in need who enter these institutions. At the same time, we shall urgently resolve the issue of responsibilities between the national and provincial spheres in the management of the FET system. We do hope that our efforts to promote this area of opportunity will help send the message especially to our young people, that artisan skills are critical for economic growth as other levels of qualification. (Mbeki 2007)

Clearly the issue of funding and governance needs immediate attention. The recapitalisation of colleges has infused in the college sector a renewed enthusiasm for its skills development responsibility and the R1.9 billion once-off capital injection will clearly go a long way in providing much needed infrastructure. There is, however, still a need for a sustained funding source.

Historical evidence of the funding of colleges suggests that it is far too under-funded to merit serious consideration. Table 12.2 shows spending at the various education levels. While some increased spending is noted in the period 1999/2000 through to 2002/2003 (from R827 million to R979 million), and a proportional spend of 1.48 to 1.75% of total education spend, respectively, the low aggregate-level expenditure suggests very little attention to the sector.

Table 12.2: National education spending (1999–2003)

Spending	1999/2000	2001/2002	2002/2003
GDP*	809	958	1 036
Education*	48	54	56.5
GET inc college*	40.5	45.5	48
% of education	84.38%	84.26%	84.96%
HET*	6.2	7	7.3
% of GDP	0.82%	0.78%	0.71%
% of education	12.92%	12.96%	12.92%
College sector**	827	869	979
% of education expenditure	1.48%	1.55%	1.75%
% of provincial expenditure		18% of provincial budgets	

Figures given in billions of rands
*Source: * DoE (2006b)*
*** RSA National Treasury (2005a)*

The low college spending is also reinforced by the provincial average of 1.8% of all provincial education budgets. The discrepancy in spending is reinforced by the various provinces. For instance, of the R869 million allocated to colleges in 2001/2002, Gauteng made up 32%, while the Northern Cape only made up 2% (DoE 2005b).

Conclusion

The political space has been opened for FET colleges to take their place in national skills development. The AsgiSA initiative led by the deputy president in its 2007 annual report makes the following point about education and the role of FET colleges:

> Inadequate education and skills development is one of the six 'binding constraints' on accelerated and shared economic growth and development. Education and skills provision are a fundamental responsibility of government…The department has identified the FET colleges sector to expand educational opportunity, preparing young people for the working world in response to intermediate and higher-level skills requirements. (RSA 2007:16)

This is further emphasised in various ministerial pronouncements. The Minister of Education is on record as stating: 'The FET colleges have taken a central place in the skills development terrain, and we will be expanding our marketing drive to encourage more students to consider college education'.[1] In addition to this, bursaries have been offered as incentives for ensuring that enrolment is directed at scarce skills. It is anticipated that the objective of training 50 000 artisans in the next two years in order to cope with the increasing demand for technical skills is likely to be realised by these mechanisms.

Clearly, government intends for the sector to take its rightful place as an education and training provider of note. There is an intention to enable colleges to be considered 'first-choice' rather than 'last-chance' institutions. Arguably, current trends suggest that the sector is well on its way to taking its rightful place in the national skills provision agenda, although there is much that still needs to be done. In the vacuum left by the technikon sector, which has been inserted as a component of higher education, colleges can usefully occupy the vacant space which will move them from their inconsequential position to the forefront of skills provision. The imperatives of AsgiSA and the skills development component, Jipsa, clearly depend on all state organs becoming more involved in skills development.

Promising trends have been noted in the sector – trends which could quite easily be built upon. The potential needs to be accompanied by purposeful action. The challenge for the sector is to manage the inevitable tension that might result as a consequence of working transversally across two ministries with, what appears on the surface as, two quite different mandates. This will not be difficult if both the ministries and colleges understand that they will, after all, be jointly held to account for their role in ensuring the goals of poverty reduction and unemployment which are to be achieved by 2014.

Note

1. IOL, Drive to address skills shortage – Pandor. Accessed March 2008, http://www.iol. co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=105&art_id=nw20070213125810855C223037>

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13 Corporate social investment in education: The paradox of poverty alleviation in South Africa

Delia Nzekwu

The role of the business sector as a key partner in South Africa's pre-1994 political negotiations has led to the continued expectation that business has a prominent role to play in addressing the wrongs of the past. Public- and private-sector interests in corporate social investment (CSI) have grown in the past decade, and continue to do so, giving impetus to change being forged through public policy. The belief in the enormous potential of CSI as a key driver of the nation's transformation agenda is the motivating factor in assessing its place in education and the extent to which it can alleviate poverty.

What is CSI?

CSI can be said to have its roots in corporate social responsibility (CSR). Whether we define the term as social responsibility or ethical investment, it essentially involves wealth creation. It is an involvement in the distribution of resources to tackle poverty while offering access to opportunities for wealth creation. This is done either directly or indirectly, and, in business jargon, it is about paying attention to the 'triple bottom line' (Garten 2000) – the economic, social and environmental. CSI can also be described as the humanitarian element in capitalism, existing in opposition to the notion that 'a free market and an efficient economy does not lead to happiness' and that 'poverty reduction and an improvement in the quality of life are not dependent on economic growth'.[1]

CSI as a value system is given expression in the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) code of conduct for black economic empowerment (BEE) (DTI 2003) and is intended to be integral to public and private transformation initiatives. The DTI code can best be understood as an exertion of the state's

developmental position towards market forces, underscoring its role as the custodian of 'the common good'. It is a strong, friendly measure of coercion. Although the DTI code is said to be a business 'guide', implicit punitive outcomes for non-compliance belie arguments of voluntariness on the part of business.

At the time of writing, the conceptualisation of CSI within the BEE framework has a significant flaw. Generally described as a 'residual element' in the BEE scorecard, CSI serves to complement key BEE elements when it becomes necessary to generate additional points. There is, therefore, little real impetus to take it seriously. President Thabo Mbeki is quoted as saying that 'BEE is about radically increasing the numbers of South Africans with modern professional qualifications and productive skills'.[2] The seemingly insurmountable problems with skills shortages in South Africa would therefore appear to justify business spreading its corporate reach into areas such as education and skills development. The location of CSI in broad-based BEE (BB-BEE), however, reflects a paradox inherent in the neo-liberal system of the current political dispensation, as legislation struggles to simultaneously protect the interests of business and those of the once disadvantaged majority.

A case for CSI in education

CSI in education is imperative to the nation's transformation efforts and poverty alleviation objectives. Education (or the lack of it) has played a major role in South Africa's political legacy, and research findings show that education can obliterate the distinction between social groups, just as it can amplify social inequalities. South Africa's current illiteracy levels remain high – there are currently six to eight million functionally illiterate adults over 15 years of age[3] – and the potential for employment for many black students remains low while poverty levels rise. The number of schools and pupil enrolment figures have steadily risen over recent years, but historical backlogs make the national budget insufficient to provide for the needs of all schools. Public expenditure on education currently makes up at least 20% of the total budget.

There is no gainsaying that CSI in education is imperative to the nation's efforts at transformation and alleviating poverty. South Africa's private sector should be commended for its level of CSI contribution in education, which constitutes the single largest portion of CSI funding. This contribution is

shared among the various sectors of education in the following order of preference: schooling (foundation phase, primary, secondary and further education and training), tertiary or higher education (HE), early childhood development (ECD), and adult basic education and training (Abet).

A critical look at the nature of funding and its desired objectives reveals some problems with business's contribution to education. ECD, for instance, is not a favourite investment space for business and government; this despite the fact that researchers have depicted its strong impact on general education and poverty alleviation in the long term, and, therefore, its invaluable social and economic impact on society. The need for quick returns on investments has left this sector one of the least resourced. Although CSI-spend on schooling is the highest, with mathematics and science receiving the largest chunk of the expenditure, the emphasis on grades 9 to 12 (to the detriment of the lower grades) has a patent result: poorly qualified entrants into tertiary institutions and poorly qualified graduates. Add to this the decline in CSI funding to teacher development and educational materials, and the picture is even more worrying. The overriding reason proffered by business for how it spends on education rests on good return on investment.

While the challenge remains to what extent business can or should be made to sacrifice for the common good, and ensure genuine poverty alleviation objectives via its incursion into education, CSI in education is not a new phenomenon in South Africa. Since the 1970s, business responses to the problems in education have been tempered by issues of class. For example, the beneficiary criteria for entrants into the Carnegie-financed Project for the Advancement of Community Education (Pace) in Soweto included that: children must be committed to a commercial future, must have good primary-school records, must pass entrance examinations in english and mathematics and be able to afford a fee of R1 400 per annum (Kallaway 1984). Considering that Pace was established during one of the most difficult times in the educational life of the country and in one of the most volatile places where little schooling was taking place and poverty levels were high, the beneficiary criteria appear problematic.

Very little has changed in terms of class exclusion in CSI. The process remains selective, with the majority of beneficiaries falling within the strata of the privileged who attend well-resourced schools, most of which are located in urban or semi-urban areas. In addition, private-sector support is often

dependent on the 'functionality' of the school and functionality is reliant on multi-faceted factors such as infrastructure, teaching facilities, governance and district government support systems. The schools most lacking in 'functionality' are generally located in townships and rural areas – areas business generally prefers not to venture into. The poor funding of Abet, among other sectors, also has an impact on the slow pace of cascading poverty alleviation within broader society.

Conclusion

Public/private partnerships where CSI in education is concerned are hugely challenged by public policy. As already highlighted, one of the shortcomings of BB-BEE, and thus a national paradox of poverty alleviation, is its lack of 'broadness'. The myriad criticisms of BEE need not be recounted here. The DTI code tends to underplay the potency of education as a key empowerment determinant. Whilst not attempting to credit education as being the panacea to all issues of poverty, for it is widely agreed that the benefits of education to its recipients can only be felt when other macro elements such as the availability of employment are in place, the argument remains that education has the potential to alleviate poverty and empower individuals, the community and society in general.

In trying to redress the past and put the nation firmly on the path to transformation, legislation has, ironically, relegated CSI in education, which has been an invaluable element of empowerment, to near oblivion. Both in the short and long terms, the losers are the majority of our population. This depicts a paradox inherent in the role of the South African state as a protector of a capitalist means of production. In order to simultaneously protect the common good and the interests of the owners of capital, compromises need to be made. The present situation is beneficial neither to capital nor to the majority of South Africans in the long run.

Notes

1.   World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2005, www.weforum.org/site

2.   *Sunday Independent*, 25 April 2004

3. www.southafrica.info/essinfo/saglance/education/; www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/ query (Accessed October 2006)

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14 Challenges facing the implementation of policy on girls' education in Zanzibar

Issa Ziddy

Zanzibar consists of two main islands, Unguja and Pemba, and several other smaller islands, some of which are uninhabited. Zanzibar is part of the United Republic of Tanzania. The Union Government is responsible for defence, external affairs, financial policy and higher education; while the Zanzibar Government has autonomy over Zanzibar's development policy, recurrent and capital activities and forms of education other than higher education.

In September 1964 education was proclaimed free to all Zanzibaris. In recent years, Zanzibar has come up with a number of policy documents where the issues of access, quality and equity of education have been discussed and the major gaps facing the Zanzibar education system highlighted. The *Zanzibar Education Policy* (ZEP), first issued in 1991, articulated key sectoral objectives and targets (MECS 1995). The policy was amended in 1995 in order to include emergency goals as declared by important international conventions. The Zanzibar Education Master Plan (ZEMAP) drawn up in 1996 (MECS 1996), specified goals, objectives and plans of action for the next 10 years. Among the key issues featured in ZEMAP were equity, quality relevance, promotion of science and technology, and the expansion of education at all levels.

Aims and objectives

This chapter presents and discusses some facts about Zanzibar's implementation of ZEP, and in particular, experience, performance and challenges regarding girls' education. According to the ZEP of 1995 and ZEMAP of 1996 and 2005 and the Zanzibar Growth and Reduction of Poverty Strategy (MoFEA 2006) the following are the key targets to be reached with regard to girls' education policy in Zanzibar:

- To eliminate gender disparities in education.
- To increase productivity and income.

- To empower women and give them access to knowledge.
- To increase their participation in social, cultural and political life.
- To provide knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.
- To improve girls' living conditions.
- To increase the proportion of girls joining lower and higher secondary education by 5% annually, in order to fill the gaps left by girls who stop attending school due to early pregnancies and marriages.
- To increase the literacy rate among females from 76.8% in 2004 to 85% in 2010.

In addition, following a review of the issues related to girls' education in order to determine if the implementation of the policy has been successful or not, the following questions are discussed in the chapter:

- How many girls have access to schooling?
- How many girls complete the full programme of schooling?
- How many and in what ways are illiterate girls reached by adult education or literacy programmes?
- Is there an increase in girls' interest in studying science, mathematics and applied subjects?
- What is the impact of all these inputs in the fight against poverty?
- How do we consider the future of women's education as a strategy for poverty reduction?
- How do we consider women's participation and their role in social, cultural and political life?

This chapter concludes by indicating the areas where there are successes and where thre are gaps that require urgent attention.

A historical background of girls' education in Zanzibar

Before the British colonised Zanzibar, education was provided in Qur'anic schools where Islamic knowledge and writing using Arabic scripts were taught. Access to education was, however, only for males. Girls remained at home and were only taught domestic skills. In 1902, secular schools which taught reading, writing and numeracy using Latin and English were introduced. Very few girls (compared to the number of boys) were sent to school, and even fewer continued with their studies to secondary level.

In 1964 the Zanzibar government declared free education at all levels for all citizens and made it compulsory for every parent to enrol their children in school. However, no policies were put in place to support this declaration and gender disparity in schools remained high because most citizens had little awareness of the importance of girls' education.

Reasons for the provision of girls' education in Zanzibar

The ZEP (MECS 1995) offers equal opportunities to both sexes. In implementing this policy, Zanzibar has turned its focus to girls' education, aiming to bridge the previous education gap. This change has come about primarily because government has become aware of the potentially high returns from educating girls in terms of national and social development.

In Zanzibar, females are generally engaged in domestic reproduction – child bearing and family rearing as well as various economic activities and services. It is believed that an educated mother will be more responsible, bring up healthier children and that future learners will have healthier minds for their own development and that of the country. At the same time, it is believed that the maternal and infant mortality rate as well as reproduction rate will decrease. This should give mothers more time for economic activities, thus reducing poverty in the country. Education for girls is therefore seen as crucial for improving family viability and economic development.

The implementation of girls' education policy: A situational analysis

Compulsory basic education

According to ZEP (MECS 1995), compulsory basic education is provided for 10 years. This includes seven years of primary education, and three years of lower secondary education (Zanzibar has 229 schools in this sector). The policy aims to 'eliminate gender disparities in primary education by 2005 and at all levels in 2015'. An analysis of the policy documents reveals no significant gender inequity at the level of basic education, and data from the Ministry of Education for the year 2004 show that the number of female

students was 126 176, which is 50.5% of the total student population (MECS 2005). Thus, 'gender parity appears to have been achieved at all levels in basic education. However, in post-secondary education the enrolment of boys far outnumbers that of girls' (MoEVT 2006: 9). The same document also states that 'even beyond the basic education level, namely, in the additional two years of secondary education, parity has been achieved, and in some cases girls significantly outnumber boys' (MoEVT 2006: 6). However, the question of the quality of the education girls receive is still pertinent. Does girls' education really contribute to poverty reduction among females and in Zanzibar as a whole?

Primary education

The age for primary education in Zanzibar is 7–13 years. However, other studies found that girls are enrolled in primary education at slightly older ages than boys, and that the average number of primary pupils per classroom in the year 2000 was around 82 (MECS 2004).

Looking at the years 2000 to 2004, the enrollment of girls in all primary classes has been increasing and does not differ significantly from that of boys. However, there are instances of disparity in enrolment in some districts of Zanzibar. In the context of national enrollment figures, the highest enrolment in 2004 was in the urban district (19.7% male and 21.1% female), while the South district contributed 3.8% male and female to the national figures, and Micheweni contributed 7.3% male and 6.5% female (MECS 2004).

This gap needs to be narrowed so as to achieve the target noted previously. The challenge that faces the primary level in relation to poverty reduction is not only how to use increased financial resources more effectively, but also how to combat the generally poor economic status of parents so that they are able to let their children complete the primary level and move into secondary education. In my opinion, these points need urgent attention so as to make success at this level sustainable.

Secondary education

There are two systems of secondary education in Zanzibar. Both are determined by the Primary National Examination for Standard 7. Students who perform

well qualify to go to 'biased secondary schools' for four years up to Form 4 (O-level), and can then do a further two years of advanced secondary schooling (Forms 5 and 6). Only 3% of students are selected to join biased secondary schools (MoEVT 2006).

Other students who pass less successfully, join ordinary secondary schools which have three cycles. The first cycle has three years up to Form 2, where the first year is focused on improving English proficiency. At the end of Form 2 they sit for another national examination and those who qualify enter into the second cycle of two years (Form 3 and Form 4). About 40% of students who sat for the first cycle examination in 2004 were selected for the second cycle. Those who performed well in the fourth form national examination (O-level) enter into the third cycle of higher secondary education (advanced level – Form 5–6) (MoEVT 2006).

Enrolment at lower secondary level in 2004 was 50.3%. Girls constituted 50.4% of this figure, implying that there were more girls than boys in secondary schools (MECS 2004). In the same year, the second cycle of secondary education enrolled 10 237 students, of which 4 981 were girls. The participation of girls at this level is therefore almost on a par with that of boys (48.7%, as opposed to 51.3% for boys).

As noted earlier, the operational target for girls in the ZEP is to increase the proportion of girls who join lower and higher secondary education by 5% annually so as to fill the gaps left by female students who drop out of school. Data from the Ministry of Education indicated that the enrolment for girls at this level increased from 112 in 1997 to 249 in 2003, but continuing dropouts mean that achieving a 5% annual increase cannot be accomplished (MECS 2005). However, there are several NGOs specialising in women's education, like the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) which promotes science education amongst girls, that are attempting to tackle this problem. At the time of writing, FAWE Zanzibar paid the tuition fees of 300 girl students in secondary schools, and had succeeded in getting more than 176 girls from different districts of Zanzibar who had dropped out, back into school (FAWE Zanzibar 2005). At the same time one can observe that there is a disparity among districts. For example, in 2004, South district enrolled 4.9% male and 4.2% female students, and Micheweni district enrolled 6.7% male and 5.1% female students.

An analysis of higher secondary and technical education reveals remarkable gender disparities, especially at Form 5 and Form 6 levels. Here the proportion of girls attending school is 32.9% and 28.1%, respectively. For example, in 2000 the total enrolment was 794 students (70.4% of which were male and 29.6% female). In 2001 the total number of students enrolled was 716 (70.8% male and 29.2% female), while in 2004 there were 1 171 students (62.9% male and 37.1% female). In Full Technical Education the enrolment in 2000 was 69.2% male and 30.8% female. In 2001 it was 66.8% male and 33.2% female; while in 2004 it was 75.8% male and 24.2% female (MECS 2005).

We can conclude our description of secondary education by stating that some strengths are apparent – near gender equity at the lower secondary levels, plus the success of NGOs like FAWE as mentioned above. Improvements have occurred despite various cultural and historical legacies which tend to discourage secondary schooling for girls.

Technical difficulties include the small number of girls who join biased secondary schools. In addition, there are no hostel facilities for female students or those with special needs. All these issues need urgent attention if education is to aid poverty reduction.

Non-formal education

Non-formal education in Zanzibar takes place in the form of literacy programmes, post-literacy programmes and continuing education. The 2002 national census shows that literacy among females was 61.2%, and varied between districts. The urban district had the highest literacy level (81.1%), and the lowest level was recorded in the Micheweni district (39.70%) (Revolutionary Government of Tanzania 2002). In 2004 post-literacy programmes were provided in 72 centres where vocational training in the field of domestic science, home economy, agriculture, electricity, typing and carpentry were offered.

When we look at the operational target in the education policy, which is to increase the literacy rate of women from 76.8% in 2004 to 85% in 2010, we find that some work has been done; especially when we learn that in 2004 there were 72 post-literacy centres with a total enrolment of 1 396 adults, of which 92.3% were women (MECS 2005). According to the *Zanzibar Growth*

and Reduction of Poverty Strategy (MoFEA 2006), the percentage of illiterate women is high and it is suggested that there is need to promote public debate on issues of gender-based violence, division of labour and workload. Debates of this type are important in a society where there are a number of youths who cannot complete their formal for various reasons, including heavy workload in their families which deprives them of the chance to enroll in formal education.

In order to reach the established targets, the government has established alternative education centres where one year of effective teaching of a lower primary integrated curriculum is provided (Standards 1–3). Those who pass the examination are mainstreamed to Standard 3. In 2005 there were more than 2 000 youths, of whom only 20% were female (FAWE 2005). In my view, the number of girls enrolled at the centres is low because it is difficult for parents in Zanzibar to give daughters who have dropped out of school an opportunity to return. Again, NGOs like FAWE are active in this area.

Another area of informal education is continuing education. There are centres in Zanzibar that provide adults and basic-education graduates who miss the opportunity for further education with skills and professional courses in areas such as accountancy, banking, computer literacy, languages and law. By 2004, 54.4% of the adults enrolled in continuing education classes were women (MECS 2005).

Before moving on to discuss higher education, it would be opportune to remind readers that in higher secondary education (F5 and F6) and technical education we can observe the beginning of remarkable gender disparities. Yet success at this level forms the starting point for higher education and is crucial for the achievement of two of the policy targets stated earlier, namely: to 'empower women and give them access to knowledge' and 'increase their participation in social, cultural and political life'.

Obstacles to the enrolment of girls in higher learning institutions

It is mentioned in Zanzibar's *Growth and Reduction of Poverty Strategy* that one of the key objectives in a gender-aware education policy is: 'to improve efficiency in the delivery of educational services' (MoFEA 2006: ix). This

emerged after it was observed that the high number of girls dropping out from school was largely due to pregnancy and that early marriages were on the increase. There were also reports of gender-based violence and harassment.

A further statement by Zanzibar's Ministry of Education explains that: 'Poor performance of girls at O-level examinations and dropout of potential learners at lower levels of secondary education are major reasons for gender disparities which are marked by unsatisfactory participation of girls at higher secondary and other institutions of higher learning' (MECS 2005: 33). In my opinion, both cases are influenced by social, economic and geographical factors, which to differing degrees deny girls access to higher education.

Social factors

The most significant social factors affecting low enrollment and high dropout figures for girls in Zanzibar are as follows:

- Boys are generally favoured within households while girls are prepared in their future roles as mothers and housewives. Their main task includes caring for the young, cooking, cleaning, fetching water and firewood, and other domestic chores. Boys have lighter duties and are given more time to focus on schooling.
- Sexual harassment sometimes originates in the home and girls are punished if they refuse to give in to these demands. They are also often harassed on their way to school and face sexual harassment at school from male students and even teachers. A percentage of girls drop out of school because of this harassment.
- Girls are given no support to study after school hours and tough restrictions on leaving the home for study, library reading or group revision narrow girls' opportunities. Boys undergo schooling under very different circumstances.
- There are few role models for girls in professional arenas such as medicine, engineering and business.
- Early pregnancy and early marriage are a major factor in causing girls to be expelled from school. Annually 30 to 40 girls are excluded from school due to marriage, and 20 to 30 are expelled because of teenage pregnancies.

Economic factors

The most significant economic factors affecting low enrollment and high dropout figures for girls in Zanzibar are as follows:

- At the time of writing, Zanzibar's unemployment rate stood at 23% for the labour force aged 15–19 years, and 7% for the labour force aged 25–29. Land and labour productivity are low and agricultural produce is poorly marketed (MoFEA 2006). Many families are therefore poor to the extent that poverty contributes to poor performance at school and dropout. Girls are generally more affected by this than boys. If a family has limited resources, it will prefer to fund a boy's education and marry the girl child to any potential husband. Boys can also go to school with ragged, unkempt uniforms, while Zanzibar's culture stresses that girls must be well groomed. This can also be a factor in causing girls to engage in sex for money or goods, which results in teenage pregnancy or early marriage as well as HIV/AIDS.

- Another challenge is insufficient resources to manage girls' hostels. Boarding schools in general (and for girls in particular) lack proper environments in which to study. The few hostels for girls in Zanzibar are generally overcrowded with decrepit facilities, little furniture and no libraries or reading facilities. It is also a factor that the 'Ministry cannot supply meals in the hostels, the girls need to depend upon themselves' (MECS 2005: 34). This is a major contributing factor to poor exam results and not achieving education policy targets.

Geographical challenges

Many Zanzibar schools are scattered throughout the island and 57% of school children live at least 3 km from their schools. There are also transport difficulties, which affect girls in particular. They generally have to walk to school, depend on lifts or take public transport. Walking long distances in poor conditions sometimes results in lateness and fatigue. Sometimes taking lifts can also cause sexual harassment and taking a bus every day may not be possible because of economic constraints. All these challenges affect girls' school performance and can lead to dropout.

Higher education

At the time of writing, Zanzibar had three institutions of higher education – one government and two private. These are the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), the Zanzibar University and the University College of Education. The courses provided at these institutions are languages, social sciences, general science, education, law, Sharia law, and business administration. In 2004, the female population in all three institutions constituted 21.8% of the total student body (Mwinyimvua 2006).

When we return to the objectives of the education policy for women, the key issue is how we can achieve these targets at the level of higher education. The establishment of the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), which increases opportunities for Zanzibar students to access higher education, is a positive development, but when it comes to the enrolment of female students there is still a great deal to be done. According to SUZA (2006) various attempts have been made to increase the number of female students in higher education institutions, such as:

- Special concessions for female students, as outlined in the national guidelines for granting student loans for 2006/2007. Article 3.8 states that new male applications with outstanding academic performance whose A-level academic scores are Division I and female applications whose A-level scores are Division I or II are eligible for loans beginning 2006/2007.
- At Suza the Department of Science has succeeded in getting funds from the Tanzania Education Authority to help them to establish special pre-university science courses for female students to assist them to achieve the required points to study science at SUZA. The first initiative started in 2005 with 32 students, of which 25 qualified and enrolled. In 2006, 50 students registered in the course, 28 of which qualified and enrolled at SUZA.
- FAWE Zanzibar has established a science campus programme where they pay tuition fees and provide hostel facilities to some young female students.

Conclusion

It is clear that Zanzibar society today is broadly aware of the importance of girls' education. The formulation of a girls' education policy was a first step in increasing awareness. The establishment of a policy of education for all and the planning of strategies aimed at proper implementation of that policy is the second step in resolving the issue.

Co-operation between government and the private sector with institutions, NGOs, faith-based organisations and development partners in the arena of female education gives us a hope that the future of education for girls and women as a strategy for poverty reduction is well defined. However, if poverty remains at current levels, this will hinder the implementation of a girls' education policy and limit the prospect of using female education as a strategy for poverty reduction.

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15 The role of the media in education and poverty reduction

Jane Stadler

In order to address issues of policy coherence research must first question how the mass media might contribute to education and poverty reduction. The media can be educational in its own right, but in a broader sense it can also inform perceptions of and attitudes towards education, educators and socio-economic inequity. Rather than suggesting that policy should be used directly to govern media content, this research indicates that policy might more productively establish guidelines for best practice, informing the development of and access to media technologies, media literacy and media content in the education sector and in the wider community. This chapter argues that the specific area that requires coherence in terms of the media's role in and impact on education and development involves fostering a culture in which the different stakeholders – educators and academic researchers, media practitioners, policy-makers, corporate citizens and members of the public – work together towards mutual goals. It is the role of policy to guide and co-ordinate this process, and to clarify the goals we strive to attain.

The media affect us in many ways: as a significant socialising influence; a carrier of culture; a source of information, education and entertainment; an important factor in political communication; and a communicator of ideological values and norms, attitudes and beliefs. The media also represent and construct conceptions of what constitutes a successful and valued life, along with what is considered to be deficient, deviant, marginalised or undesirable. In all these ways, the media exert an influence on issues relating to stigma, self-esteem, social relations, economics and politics. For instance, the way in which socio-economic status is framed in the entertainment and news media significantly influences how audiences understand and feel about social equity and how we treat those who are impoverished, homeless or unemployed. As analyst Diana Kendall argues: 'myths and negative perceptions about the working class and the poor create a reality that seemingly justifies the superior positions of the upper-middle and upper classes and establishes them as entitled to their

privileged position in the stratification system' (Kendall 2005: 2–3). While it is true that lack of education is a strong determinant of poverty, it is also clear that more affluent members of society and media practitioners themselves require education about poverty if meaningful social change is to occur.

When considering the relationship between the media, education and poverty, a number of aspects warrant attention, among them: media content (representations, stereotypes, systematic bias and structuring absences), media technologies (issues of access and technological determinism), and media policies (which address language, technology, content and scheduling). While the scope of this paper is limited to the media, the role of education policy in implementing the systematic inclusion of critical media literacy and the development of information and communication technology (ICT) skills in the curriculum is a related area of importance.

Media content, technologies and policies all convey discourses about both poverty and education that frame the way these matters are constructed and thought of in society. The discourse or body of ideas circulating in society about a particular topic or social group can influence the way that we think and feel about others and the way that we behave. Discourses of class conveyed by the media include constructions of the poor and homeless as a 'problem' associated with crime, disease and substance abuse; as dehumanised statistics; as individual instances of suffering detached from broader contributing factors like unemployment; as lazy, ignorant, or otherwise responsible for their own misfortune; and many variations on these themes (Kendall 2005). Frequently the poor and uneducated are simply overlooked and rendered invisible in the media in favour of press and entertainment media that enables the voices and viewpoints of more prominent and affluent members of society to be expressed. For this reason, publications such as *The Big Issue*[1] are important because they enable a degree of visibility, empowerment and self representation.

Similarly, the media informs public conceptions of the status and value of education and educators, establishing expectations and attitudes that impact on the ability of the school system to function at an optimal level. In his article 'Discipline and chaos: The new right and discourses of derision' Stephen Ball suggests that discursive constructions of educators and education both in government documents and in media commentary subtly informs and limits the possibilities of education policy (Ball 2006). Ball argues that mediated

conceptions of the education sector tend to be framed negatively, presenting the public schooling system as being in a state of 'crisis and chaos', with 'academic standards in decline', and describing teachers as lazy, ignorant and 'unable or unwilling' to maintain discipline in the classroom (Ball 2006: 28–29). As Ball points out, such assumptions are self-perpetuating and are used to blame education for juvenile delinquency, crime and the nation's economic decline, irrespective of evidence to the contrary. When positive stories about education feature in the media, they often exist to foreground isolated success stories that attribute achievement to an individual succeeding despite (rather than because) of the education system. This discursive construction reinforces ideologies of individualism and competition, rather than supporting an egalitarian ethos in education policy.

In offering an overview of the complex relationships between media, education and poverty, this chapter will consider the importance of media technologies, global media flows, and examples drawn from radio and television programming, education-entertainment initiatives, and public service announcements with particular attention to the impact on the most vulnerable members of our community who are disadvantaged by gender, health and disability. Working from the understanding that the media should be integral to the functioning of a healthy society, and that media texts and technologies can have a significant impact on understanding and behaviour, this paper will address media initiatives related to education and poverty reduction. The strengths and limitations of media initiatives such as youth education through radio, public information campaigns and education-entertainment television dramas will be considered in light of the implications for media policy and effective communication, with a view to envisioning practical ways to direct media content and technologies towards social change.

Policy, media ownership and social equity

This chapter approaches matters of policy from the perspective of the 'capabilities approach' to policy development outlined in *Quality of Life* (Nussbaum & Sen 1993) and *Women, Culture and Development* (Nussbaum & Glover 1995). The capabilities approach suggests that policies should be devised to optimise the capabilities of all members of society to function

and flourish, based on a complex measure of quality of life that includes life expectancy, healthcare, political participation, and educational and employment opportunities that enhance freedom of choice and support the capacity to lead a creative and rewarding life (Nussbaum & Glover 1995). In this view an impoverished life is not just characterised by a lack of economic means, but by the diminished capability to attain a satisfactory quality of life due to a range of reasons that may include political or cultural disadvantage, or inadequate access to basic requirements such as education, healthcare, nutrition, housing and employment. Nussbaum points out that members of different demographics in society need varying resources if they are to achieve equal opportunities to flourish. In every area of public policy we must strive for a more equitable distribution of attention and resources – but equity does not mean numerical equivalence, because different groups require resources in different measure. Consider, for instance, the situation of women in relation to poverty and education. Relative to their male counterparts, women and girls frequently receive only a small proportion of economic and educational opportunities and benefits (Sen 1995). Consequently, women require proportionately more assistance to achieve a similar quality of life. This is particularly pertinent to matters of poverty alleviation, given that the average employment participation rates of women are half that of men and 'even when women are employed, their situation is undercut by pervasive wage discrimination and by long hours of unpaid household labour' (Nussbaum 1995: 2).

As a socialising force and a source of information and entertainment, the media has the potential to be an agent for social change or a tool to maintain hegemonic power structures such as the gender inequity described above. The content of media texts partly determine the impact that the media has on society, but patterns of media ownership and control are also important. The ideal of the role of the media in supporting positive social change can be compromised by the transnational, oligopolistic character of the media industry. Deregulation and privatisation of the media has created a situation in which the media industry itself now requires a watchdog. Economic freedom of the press is clearly essential if it is to be an effective agent of political communication. However, market forces often lead to the concentration of ownership and control in the hands of an elite group, with a corresponding loss of diversity in the range of views expressed in the media. This necessitates the creation of policies and regulatory bodies to monitor and prevent the

formation of monopolies, and to protect both independent media and public broadcasting. In addition to the issue of media ownership, the capitalist and materialist ideologies that drive the commercial media may also work to limit the progressive, educative function of the media by restricting the range of voices and views available. Because the South African media are influenced by and incorporate international media sources, it is important to question the nature of both local and global media trends when assessing the role the media might play in education and poverty alleviation.

Media, technology and social change in the era of globalisation

The utopian view of globalisation encapsulated in Marshall McLuhan's phrase 'the global village' (1987) suggests that people of the world can be brought closer together by the globalisation of communication media. The global village paints an image of a world in which everyone's voice has a chance to be heard. Interactive media facilitates participation in global communication and debates, offering entry into public space. The globalisation of communication enables us to share in each other's lives (as members of internet communities, or by means of mediated participation in events like a World Cup, or the call for aid to victims of natural disasters, and so on). In this ideal environment, the globalisation of communication is seen as an agent of empowerment, education and equality. The global dispersal of knowledge facilitates a culture open to sharing responsibility for issues that affect us all and recognising obligations to individuals and groups we may never personally meet. This utopian vision of the rewards of globalisation suggests that the world can be united harmoniously by media and communication technologies that improve quality of life for one and all. Technological developments and globalising forces can, however, also have detrimental und uneven effects that warrant consideration.

The technology used to communicate a message also structures the way we think and interact and perceive the world. We are beginning to see ourselves as members of a unified 'rainbow nation' and as global citizens in part because new communication technologies have enabled us to relate to each other in this way. Different media also relate to different ways of organising power. For example, print media privileges sight, education and the media producer,

correlating with a relatively impersonal, linear, rational way of thinking and interacting. By contrast, talk-back radio creates a sense of participation and community in an accessible forum that is not dependent on literacy and that does not require a significant capital outlay. Newer media forms such as mobile telephony and computer-mediated communication offer increasing interactivity, autonomy and choice on the part of the user, and unprecedented personal control over the production, manipulation and distribution of content. For these reasons the 'democratic' attributes of new media have been praised for equalising the power balance between media consumers and media producers and, in some cases such as blogs and wikis, obliterating the distinction altogether. For all the advantages that new media technologies offer some citizens, such media effectively disempowers and disadvantages those who lack the education, abilities and economic means to access and use them; hence media policy must actively work to establish inclusiveness, directing resources to closing rather than widening gaps in accessibility.

While ICTs clearly offer enabling benefits, technological developments are themselves shaped by socially-bound perceptions of the needs, interests and purposes that technology serves: 'Technology is always a form of social knowledge, practices and products. It is the result of conflicts and compromises, the outcomes of which depend primarily on the distribution of power and resources between different groups in society' (Wacjman, in Goggin & Newell 2003: 3). New developments in media technologies reflect entrenched social structures and mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion. For instance, while the technological capacity exists to meet the needs of blind web users without great expense, the majority of websites are only set up to cater to the needs of highly literate, sighted people, thereby unnecessarily diminishing the capability of blind people to access the educative benefits of the internet. The development and implementation of new media technologies frequently follows market forces and reproduces existing power relations instead of transforming them, and access to new media technologies is dependent on money and education. For these reasons, media policy must play an important role in regulating new technological developments and the manner in which they are made accessible to various sectors of the population.

While the kind of 'empowerment' that global media products and technologies offer is often only available to those who already have an adequate level of education, ability and income, ICTs also have potential benefits for

economic and social development. For instance, the media can work to foster development and education, facilitating access to valuable information about healthcare, agricultural techniques and education, as well as enhancing transparency and accountability with regard to political policy and practices. As information flow, speed and volume increase, decreasing sensitivity to distance and diminishing production costs should render the benefits of ICTs more accessible to disadvantaged members of society and to rural communities.

Market forces versus human needs and interests

In addition to technology, language is also important as a carrier of culture and a means of forming communities. In the contemporary media environment English is increasingly becoming the language of mass communication, thereby contributing to the processes of inclusion and exclusion based on linguistic capabilities. South Africa features an astonishing degree of cultural and linguistic diversity, and the national media must serve the needs of 12 language groups, including sign language. When the South African media was restructured after apartheid and private broadcasting corporations entered a market previously controlled by the government, there was some debate as to whether the free market would independently develop media services to cater to the different language groups and cultures within South Africa. Those with commercial media interests argued that the different sectors of South African society would define new markets, and media suppliers would meet their diverse demands. The different language groups are, however, characterised by different demographics, locations, spending power and the unequal social relations entrenched by apartheid and colonialism. This means that not every group will be as attractive to advertisers. As Clive Barnett writes:

> In this context, market-based solutions to broadcasting reform will tend to facilitate the reproduction of patterns of inequality in access to services. With respect to the relationship between broadcasters and advertisers, broadcasting markets facilitate the representation of the tastes and interests of those social groups who constitute a commercially attractive demographic group for advertisers, who in turn will be those groups who have sufficient market power as consumers. (Barnett 2000: 60)

To deal with this, South Africa settled on a system of proportional representation in which the needs of different demographics and language groups would be met by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), the national public service broadcaster. As Barnett's comments apply to the diversity of the broader African media context and to the global market as much as they do to the South African situation, this example suggests a need for a regulatory body that is able to look after the needs of marginalised groups on a global scale.

Nancy Snow claims that global monopolies, the proliferation of ICTs and the convergence of communication technologies 'concentrates control over the most widely shared messages and images' (2001: 25). This effectively means that cultural policy decisions are made by market forces and corporations, decision-makers who are neither elected representatives nor accountable to the public beyond their financial responsibility to shareholders and advertisers. John B. Thompson argues that in such a situation, 'an unregulated market may develop in a way that effectively reduces diversity and limits the capacity of most individuals to make their voices heard' (1995: 239). If we allow the development and dissemination of information and communication technology to follow market-driven forces, the market will predictably favour the best consumers, thereby further disadvantaging the poor and under-educated.

Established by Unesco in 1978, the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) was created to address media imperialism and the asymmetric flow of media, and to minimise the communication gap between developed and developing countries by creating a more balanced global media flow. The ethos driving NWICO suggested that rather than viewing media technologies and media messages as commodities, and as ways of marketing commodities, information and communication should be seen as shared resources with social value (Report by the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems 1990). The impact of the media on perceptions of nationalism and cultural identity, particularly as a result of asymmetric flows of information, was another problem NWICO sought to address. Lack of self-representation by marginalised groups and members of developing nations on the world stage was (and is) considered to be problematic as foreign coverage is often minimal, biased and negative. Self-representation and a shared code of media ethics are, therefore, desirable.

The digital divide: Communication technologies in Africa

Although it is clear that ICTs ideally help to foster development agendas, the costs of establishing a communication infrastructure to support the information super-highway are prohibitive and difficult to justify when there are other pressing priorities such as crime, poverty, housing, hunger, sanitation, health, education and social welfare competing for scarce funds. A potential drawback of projects that aim to bolster the use of ICTs in the developing world is that they make regions such as southern Africa a more substantial target for marketing and for the dissemination of Western ideologies. The discourse surrounding the development of an information super-highway extending around the world conflates the 'interests of the communication corporations with the interests of citizens' (Fourie 2001: 440). For these reasons, among others, serious inequities in the access to media technologies and in the flow of global media still exist:

> The ability to communicate is a basic human right that is denied to some according to their ability to gain access to technology. Without basic telecommunications services, groups are not able to fully participate in the global economy, participate meaningfully in political discourse, or even socially interact with the global village. (Snow 2001: 21)

The term 'the digital divide' refers to the increasing access gap between those who have and those who do not have access to new media technologies; content that is socially and economically beneficial; skills such as computer literacy and the ability to use ICT services; and, of course, money which confers the ability to pay for digital services. The presence of a digital divide indicates inequitable access to ICTs and usually relates to the difference between First- and Third-World access to the benefits of digital technology. For example, global internet usage figures released on 31 December 2007 indicate that Africa is responsible for only 3.4% of global internet usage, with the lowest proportional internet penetration of any region in the world.[2] Internet penetration is, however, increasing rapidly, with Africa's internet usage rated as the second-fastest growing region in the world (after the Middle East) and South Africa having 11.6% of its population online and a 112.5% growth in internet usage from 2000–2007.

Table 15.1: World internet usage and population statistics

Regions	Population (2007 est.)	% of world population	Internet usage (latest data)	% population (penetration)	% of world usage	% usage growth (2000–2007)
Africa	941 249 130	14.2	44 361 940	4.7	3.4	882.7
Asia	3 733 783 474	56.5	510 478 743	13.7	38.7	346.6
Europe	801 821 187	12.1	348 125 847	43.4	26.4	231.2
Middle East	192 755 045	2.9	33 510 500	17.4	2.5	920.2
North America	334 659 631	5.1	238 015 529	71.1	18.0	120.2
Latin America/ Caribbean	569 133 474	8.6	126 203 714	22.2	9.6	598.5
Oceania / Australia	33 569 718	0.5	19 175 836	57.1	1.5	151.6
World total	6 606 971 659	100.0	1 319 872 109	20.0	100.0	265.6

Source: www.internetworldstats.com
Notes:
- *Internet usage and world population statistics are for 31 December 2007*
- *Demographic (population) numbers are based on data from the US Census Bureau (http://www. census.gov/)*
- *Internet usage information comes from data published by Nielsen/NetRatings (http://www.nielsen-netratings.com/), the International Telecommunications Union (http://www.itu.int/net/home/index. aspx), local NIC and other other reliable sources*

Because of economic and educational barriers, ICTs can be seen as instrumental in widening the digital divide between those with access to ICTs and those without. In addition to the divide between developed and developing nations, the digital divide can also be based on and can contribute to inequities *within* any community, encompassing the gap between the rich and the poor, white and black, male and female, young and old, urban and rural, the able-bodied and the disabled, English-speaking populations and others. When marginalised groups are not represented in, adequately served by or afforded equal access to the media, the resulting inequity constitutes a danger to both democracy and development. In order to work towards social equity, education, and poverty alleviation, policy-makers must therefore direct resources to boost the capabilities of those on the wrong side of the digital divide by enhancing

media and communication access and skills in the education system wherever possible.

Public information campaigns and corporate social responsibility

The following section of this chapter turns from matters pertaining to industry, markets and technologies to focus on media content by examining the strengths and limitations of selected South African media initiatives that are explicitly concerned with education and development. Public information campaigns are media campaigns that specifically aim to meet educative goals using short-format advertising-based strategies in print media, radio or television to communicate information and behaviour-change messages. As Serra Tinic points out, advocacy campaigns must offer strategies for dealing with the issues that they address: 'Public service announcements typically are advocacy messages. They present a problem, describe a possible solution and encourage the public to contribute voluntarily to the organisation's social efforts' (1997: 12). In the context of media that has educative or developmental goals, it is important to offer some positive way of envisioning or enacting the future.

Looking beyond the role of governing bodies, industry and policy to explore how the wider community utilises the media for the purpose of education and development, I will give examples of corporate social responsibility initiatives in which commercial advertising agencies, multinational corporations and television broadcasters have become involved in public service communication. The examples offered below intersect with one another, as each corporation has a broad commitment to social responsibility evinced in education initiatives themed around public health and HIV awareness. First I will analyse a *pro bono* communication campaign executed by Saatchi and Saatchi (a premier international advertising agency) for a Cape Town AIDS NGO called Wola Nani, sponsored by the Levi Strauss Foundation. Saatchi and Saatchi, in turn, have an involvement in the second example, a competition for *pro bono* public service announcements called the Vuka Awards (flighted on satellite DStv and funded by the MultiChoice Africa Foundation). These initiatives exemplify some of the ways in which corporate citizens can use the media to engage with social concerns such as education and poverty.

Wola Nani, whose motto is 'A Caring Response to AIDS', is an NGO that has provided support, employment opportunities, counselling, healthcare and education to people living with HIV in Cape Town and Khayelitsha communities since it was established in 1994. 'Wola Nani' is a Xhosa phrase meaning 'we embrace and develop each other'. While the NGO does distribute condoms and offer preventative education in schools and clinics, its primary focus is on helping people with HIV live 'positive lives', and on reducing the stigma and impact of AIDS in the community. On and around World AIDS Day (1 December) Wola Nani interface with the wider public via Red Ribbon, their annual communication campaign. Volunteers wearing Wola Nani T-shirts hand out information about the organisation and raise money on the streets using tins for collection. The campaign that Saatchi and Saatchi devised free of charge included print media, radio and television advertisements, leaflets, T-shirts and a photographic exhibition.

The Red Ribbon campaign was inventive and largely successful. Although the campaign as a whole illustrates the significant benefits that corporate social investment can produce when the media, corporations and community organisations work together to educate the public, here I will focus on some of the problems inherent in delegating the task of producing a public information campaign to an advertising agency more accustomed to selling products and creating brand recognition. For instance, one aspect of the campaign featured a 'Weapons of Mass Destruction' flyer with a khaki-coloured military aesthetic and images comparing human reproductive organs with anti-personnel land mines, assault rifles and thermo-cluster bombs. The text accompanying these images states that human reproductive organs have '22 000 000 kills to date' – higher than any of the other 'weapons' that are pictured. The war metaphor was chosen because it had attention-grabbing shock value and was topical at the time, but it contradicts the caring, educational message on the reverse and it runs against the grain of Wola Nani's ethos and their intention to use the campaign as an opportunity to promote the concept of living positively with HIV/AIDS.

Figure 15.1: The 'Weapons of Mass Destruction' flyer designed by Saatchi and Saatchi for the Wola Nani campaign

Source: Courtesy of Wola Nani and Saatchi and Saatchi

The problem with the images of weapons and organs linked by the catchy phrase 'weapons of mass destruction', is that the *virus* is the 'lethal weapon' – *not* the reproductive organs of those infected with HIV. This metaphorical slippage could lead to fear and shame about sexuality and childbirth (particularly the devastating issue of mother-to-child transmission of HIV), rather than educating the public about positive behavioural change and responsible sexual health practices. In a discussion of metaphorical allusions harnessed in AIDS public service announcements (PSAs), Rodney Jones cautions that 'images of war, poverty, deviance and criminality operate to identify people with AIDS as *the other*, foreign invaders, predators and enemies of "normal society"' (1997: 393).

The advertisements simultaneously construct an ideal subject (the implied reader who is HIV-negative) and a damaged subject (people whose sexuality has become a dangerous weapon), thereby interpellating people who are already HIV-positive into a stigmatised subject position. Consideration of this possibility reveals how AIDS campaigns invite their audiences to assume particular social positions and identities and reveals how labelling contributes to shaping social practice and human relationships (Jones 1997). Here we see that, even with the best intentions, AIDS-prevention warnings may contribute

to stigma, and that formative evaluation and audience impact studies are required if media education initiatives are to be effective.

The Red Ribbon campaign illustrates the challenges of *pro bono* work, and the difficulties of mapping commercial advertising expertise onto the needs of an NGO, drawing on research methods and persuasion strategies unintended for PSAs. One of the limitations of *pro bono* work is that there is no budget for research, so the campaign ideas are developed without formally testing them first. This makes it difficult for the creators of the campaign to meet their responsibility to the public by carefully researching campaign issues and impact.

Creating a PSA often entails communication strategies and communication objectives that advertising agencies are unaccustomed to. Recent research into the similarities and differences between PSAs and commercial advertising explores how emotional responses to adverts correlate with message effectiveness. Dillard and Peck explain:

> Whereas commercial advertising is overwhelmingly positive in the feelings it attempts to evoke and the brand images it seeks to create, PSAs deal with social problems and unpleasant issues. A good/positive PSA might be one that vivifies a significant social problem (e.g. HIV, crime, poverty) and in so doing, elicits negative affects. (2000: 467)

Given these difficulties, I cannot emphasise enough the importance of representing disadvantaged and impoverished members of society in an inclusive manner, rather than representing them as a problem. In addition, I wish to underscore the importance of harnessing the resources of corporate citizens and academic researchers, bringing these groups together to work with media practitioners towards effective and educative communication and viable solutions. Part of the 'responsibility' involved in corporate social-responsibility initiatives is to ensure adequate research and thus to maximise the effectiveness of the interventions that the company is supporting. Sponsors who undertake to cover the hard costs of printing a pro bono campaign, hosting an advertising competition or broadcasting a publicity campaign should also make a commitment to testing the messages they put their name to. Research is not a corner of the budget that can safely be cut in the area of education. Here, social responsibility also extends to the academic community: carefully constructed needs assessments, media effects research

and ethnographic audience studies can help a PSA meet its communication objectives. Academic institutions should make their expertise available and contribute to creating and testing well directed campaigns with clear, informative messages, defined goals and achievable outcomes.

Turning now to focus on another corporate social responsibility initiative that involves the production of public service announcements, let us consider the Vuka competition for PSAs. Entrants are invited to produce television commercials furthering public information and education and raising awareness or support for an NGO, worthy cause or a registered charity. The best 30% of submissions are screened on DStv, MultiChoice Africa's digital satellite subscription television service. The competition attracts significant involvement from professional advertising agencies, concerned citizens, filmmakers and media students. In this context, interested parties make use of accessible digital video technology to broadcast social messages to a wide audience and to encourage active engagement with important issues such as AIDS prevention, domestic violence, poverty, literacy, environmental concerns and refugee rights.

By making public service advertising accessible to those with few resources but important messages, MultiChoice has provided a valuable social service. The nature of Vuka entries is, however, limited by the composition of the audience they address and the elite medium of satellite television in which they communicate. DStv's target market is 'primarily upper income earners, they are both male and female, and typically thirty-five and older. Most are well established and educated'.[2] Because the Vuka adverts are not flighted on public broadcast channels or free-to-air commercial television and are only available on the expensive DStv service, the Vuka messages are unable to speak to many people who would benefit from the media's capacity to educate and initiate social change. This confines the communication objectives of the Vuka PSAs to branding the NGO or charity, or requesting donations of money or time rather than tackling public education, information and behavioural change in the areas where it is most needed. In this communication environment, it is important for the SABC to learn from successful commercial initiatives and seek to emulate, adapt and disseminate PSAs through accessible media like and free-to-air television or radio where there is much room for a similar PSA competition, and for the promotion of educational initiatives like 'HIV-Hop' that use popular music as a medium of communication.

Education entertainment and steps for the future

In addition to short-format public education campaigns, extended media narratives have also been harnessed to the goals of education and development. South Africa is one of the world leaders in media projects that combine education and entertainment, known as 'edutainment media'. The edutainment movement began much by accident in South America when a popular Peruvian television soap opera called Simplemente Maria (1969–1971) introduced the character of Maria, a young domestic worker whose wealthy employer impregnated her out of wedlock and then fired her. Maria used what few resources she had to attend literacy classes and purchase a sewing machine, creating a small business that enabled her to raise herself out of poverty and provide a good upbringing for her child. The impact of this television programme on local audiences was as unintended as it was astonishing:

> Simplemente María (Simply María) is remembered as the most popular telenovela, television soap opera, ever aired in Latin America, a region where most television systems broadcast a dozen dramas a day. Yet more interesting than the overwhelming volume of viewers was the effect the show had on the audience: 'dressmaker' became the most aspired-to occupation among Peruvian maids in the 1970s, and the sales of Singer sewing machines skyrocketed in Spanish-speaking countries where the telenovela was aired. Enrolment in adult literacy classes rose, and the governments of both Peru and Mexico launched Simplemente María-inspired literacy campaigns.[3]

Since the unprecedented success of *Maria*, media theorists, educators and media practitioners have teamed up to design radio programmes, cartoons, music shows, theatrical productions and television programming that harness the educative possibilities of entertainment to serve the purpose of education and social change.

According to the leading researchers in the field, Arvind Singhal and Everett Rogers (1999), the key characteristics of edutainment include: role modelling, offering viable solutions to problems, non-didactic messages, infrastructural support for behavioural change, local relevance and the use of local languages, confronting obstacles to behaviour change, generating discussion and debate, extensive research into issues and audiences, participatory formats, credible, clear educational objectives, the depiction of 'realistic' consequences, rewards

and punishments for responsible or risky behaviours, a coherent framework of values, and a strong theoretical foundation. According to Acker:

> Behavior in individuals is most effectively changed when they are given role models who demonstrate the desired actions and who are participants in culturally familiar, emotionally compelling narratives; also, obstacles to behavior change must be acknowledged, and community support systems must be active and ready to reinforce the narrative's messages.[3]

Many of these characteristics are present in varying degrees in South African media ranging from Bush Radio's youth radio hip-hop initiatives like Children's Radio Education Workshops, kidocracy, and HIV-hop through online forums such as Baobab Connection and Contact to SABC programming such as *Soul City, Yizo Yizo* and *Tsha Tsha*, multilingual educational soap operas and educational dramas that attract loyal audiences and generate public debate.

Evidence of the impulse to combine education and entertainment is also present in media texts that are not purpose-designed edutainment such as the popular soap opera *Isidingo* and the documentary project known as *Steps for the Future* – both of which are non-didactic and include personalised narratives featuring local characters, contexts and languages, and provide links to community support infrastructures. The 36 'Steps' films made by southern African filmmakers are particularly interesting as they form part of a media advocacy campaign which is intended to promote debate and discussion around HIV/AIDS related topics such as disclosure, discrimination, treatment and living positively (Levine 2003). The positive impact of the Steps series is supported by facilitated discussions following screenings in areas that seldom have access to films such as townships and the rural areas in which many of the documentaries are set. The Steps Impact Study (Levine 2003) documents how facilitated screenings of the films catalyse discussion and debate, and provide access to HIV/AIDS-related resources, information and support. The non-didactic approach favoured by the Steps project is intended to allow people to draw their own conclusions about the content and message of each film, offering audience members the opportunity to learn from the experiences of the films' protagonists rather than giving overt directives for behavioural change. This non-didactic approach has both benefits and risks. In addition to the facilitated screenings and discussions, the films are also screened on television where their reception and interpretation is potentially more problematic as they will be viewed without the framing discourse

sometimes required to interpret the actions of protagonists in a meaningful, informed and relevant manner. The danger here is that the inherent polysemy of the non-didactic approach intentionally taken within the collection of films gives rise to the possibility of misinterpretation.

The traditional model of health education relies on a predominantly one-way transmission of information from healthcare providers to communities and patients. This takes the form of public information campaigns, pamphlets, and interpersonal delivery of information. Such a communication model often mistakenly assumes that people retain and act on information conveyed in the form of text, facts, figures, rules and warnings. Part of the value of the Steps project is that it functions to reframe sexual activity and traditional practices by positioning them in a web of cause and effect, agency and choice in a way that is relevant to cultural and interpersonal contexts rather than being abstract or medicalised. Here storytelling plays a significant role in communication and education. Narrative is a way of making meaning by organising events into causal sequences, illustrating consequences over time. This is the kind of understanding that the complex, contextual, interpersonal narratives of radio and screen media can offer, and that healthcare pamphlets and PSA slogans cannot. This is why the Steps films constitute a media intervention with the capacity to initiate positive social change.

The Steps films can function to either reinforce or change beliefs and behaviours because of their 'home-grown' nature and, therefore, the special relevance they hold to the communities they represent. Here the strength of the films' non-didactic approach and their potential to open up spaces for audience members to ask questions and debate issues and actions is in conflict with Steps' objectives as a responsible media advocacy campaign. This tension springs from the efforts to represent extremely complex and difficult situations in a way that acknowledges their complexity, but also makes it possible for members of the communities in which the films are screened to see a way forward in dealing with similar issues in our own lives: to take 'steps to the future', and to make that future one worth embracing.

Conclusion

The social and ethical implications arising from media and communication policies (including the development and dispersal of new media technologies, patterns of media ownership and control, and the production of media content by a limited range of sources) are of great signficance. On the positive side, the media have an important role to play in education, information sharing, democracy and entertainment, and the responsibilities associated with this role only become greater as the global reach of information expands. The media are capable of helping to build tolerance and understanding developed through cross-cultural sharing and through the imagined communities and relationships facilitated by technologies that help to bridge space, time and cultural differences. Media texts have the potential to expand the sphere of moral concern by fostering a sense of interconnectedness with people around the world, and by informing us of our responsibilities to one another, alerting us to the issues faced by distant others. As John B. Thompson states, 'In an increasingly interconnected world, the horizons of responsibility extend increasingly to others who are distant in space and time' (1995: 263). Even more so in local media which represents members of our own community who are not far distant from our own lives, mass communication brings the issues surrounding poverty reduction and education into our homes and makes these problems a matter for our concern, prompting dialogue, deliberation and, potentially, action.

This chapter has highlighted issues of equity and access, and the positive contribution that new media technologies have the potential to make in terms of education, empowerment, democracy and freedom need to be seen in this light. On the negative side, concerns have been expressed about the lack of research and responsibility regarding the effects of 'educational' texts, and media content that fails to reflect the diversity and needs of the public. I have argued that the globalisation of communication media brings with it many benefits, but also depersonalised decision-making and the diffusion of responsibility for representation and communication practices onto faceless entities like 'market forces'. In the worst case scenario, the globalisation of communication risks widening the digital divide and leading to the commodification of culture or the reinforcement of stigma, exclusion and bias. The recommendations below aim to avoid the negative impact of the media as much as possible and to focus on enhancing the positive potential

of the media and its use by policy-makers, members of the public, the media industry and corporate citizens.

Recommendations

Strategies to realise the beneficial aspects of the mass media might include an emphasis on self-representation and facilitating inclusiveness and increased visibility of diverse identities in the media. People from different social groups are best qualified to change perceptions and attitudes towards themselves and to share their experiences with others. They should therefore play a central role in the development of media strategies, policies and texts. It is also important to encourage diversification of media ownership and support independent media. Furthermore, policy must play an important role in regulating new technological developments and the manner in which they are made accessible to various sectors of the population – not just to the majority of people or to those with the most purchasing power. ICTs can be utilised to promote education and empowerment, giving citizens access to information. We must endeavour to design media policies to strengthen public education requirements and local content requirements for public service media and commercial broadcasters. Public service broadcasters can be used to promote media literacy and other forms of education via public information campaigns. Indeed, public information and education messages accompanying film, television and radio programmes can help to raise media literacy, enabling audience members to recognise and discredit or resist the use of stereotypes, labels and unsubstantiated opinion. If the media is to perform its role effectively, it is crucial to develop media issues and awareness projects aimed at journalists, members of the media industry and the public, encouraging people to think about and debate the roles and effects of the media on talkback radio, web-based discussions, and so forth. Finally, in the interests of a coherent approach to media, education and development, it will be beneficial to bring different stakeholders into a co-operative working relationship, encouraging an ethic of corporate social responsibility in the media by giving recognition to *pro-bono* media representation and to sponsorship of initiatives that utilise the media as an agent of positive social change, supported by responsible research.

Strategies such as these can help to create a situation in which the media contributes to the establishment of an ethic of care, contributing to education and poverty reduction. The media can be harnessed to alter and diversify existing perceptions of poverty and education once the strengths and limitations of current modes of deploying technology, communicating representations and constructing media policies are recognised. The media's role in education and poverty reduction can be reshaped by proactive media policies, enabling media technologies, and by raising awareness amongst media practitioners, presenters and the public about the different discourses of poverty and different educative strategies that are communicated to us and by us in everyday life.
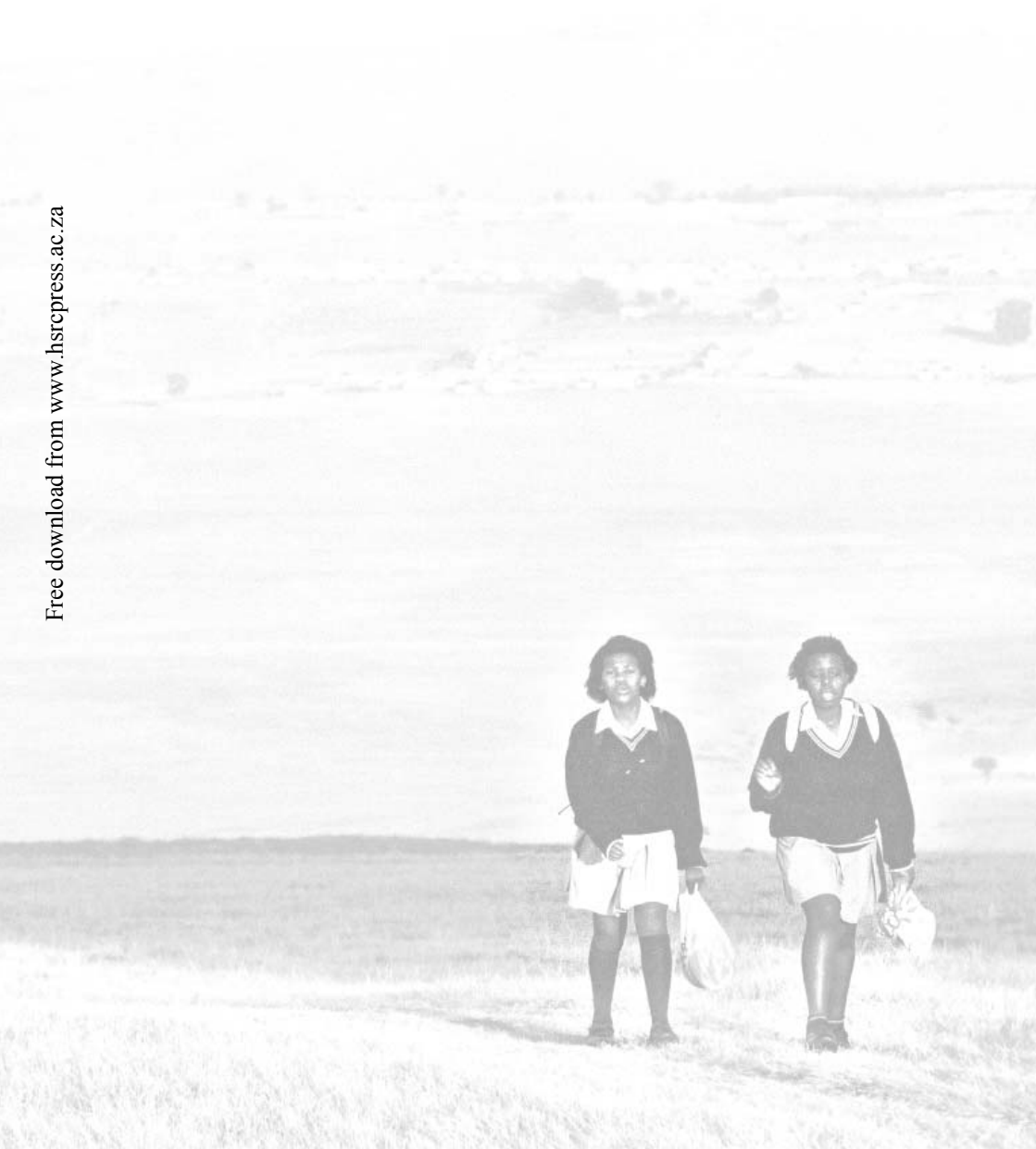
Acknowledgments

Notes

1. *The Big Issue* is a magazine sold through street vendors. It includes articles by vendors, and articles about social issues and the arts. Vendors buy the magazine at just under 50% of the cover price and sell it on to the public. Its website states: 'The Big Issue is a socially responsible organisation which enables willing, unemployed and marginalised adults living in South Africa to take responsibility for their own lives through a developmental employment programme.' (http://www.bigissue.org.za/)
2. www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm
3. http://vuka.multichoice.co.za
4. Acker J, Hope on the air, *Amherst Magazine*, Spring 2002 http://www.amherst.edu/~pubaff/news/magazine/issues/02spring/features/hope.html

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SECTION 5:
Biographies of hope

16 Integration of ex-offenders: Introduction

Edna Freinkel

First I'd like to thank you for including me in this project. I am glad to find a place to express my views. My chapter is short and includes the views of two of the people who were trained by the Readucate Trust while in prison, who speak for themselves on their life experiences. They were both determined to regain their lives after they were released from prison and were eventually successful in finding employment and are restoring their sense of dignity and self-worth. They have paid their debt to society and are now engaged in building a new and better South Africa.

Many presenters at this colloquium delivered valuable contributions on poverty. I learnt about the problems associated with poverty the hard way and I asked my 14-year-old granddaughter to write down how she sees poverty in this country. Her analysis brings the reality of it home better than I ever could. She said simply: 'Poverty is no money, no food, no electricity, no water, no clothes, no house, no cars, no bathroom, nothing and very often, because of AIDS, no parents.'

Imagine living a life as a parent with children to look after and having to beg for something, anything at all, just anything to give your family. To tell them, 'Look I see hope', and say, 'Don't worry, one day it will all change but I can't guarantee that'. Days pass, yet life does not change. It looks the same every day. No money. No food. Every day when the sun sets you have to face your family bare-handed. When you arrive home your children hope that you have brought them something to eat, but you have nothing to give to them. People like these can be helped by the government. It is not that they want to depend on the government. They need jobs, but in the meantime they need food to sustain them. It seems nobody cares about them.

Of course, many people are trying to reduce poverty, unhappiness and the lack of opportunities that poor people experience. But the government does not know how to spend its money. For instance, not so long ago, it spent R3 million on changing the name of an airport from Johannesburg International to OR

Thambo. That R3 million could have been used to feed the poorest of the poor. Presently, teachers in the rural areas estimate that between 50% and 70% of children from Grade 1 to Matric can barely read if at all. Hundreds and thousands of learners drop out of schools. The tendency to fall into criminal life is great. Eventually they get arrested. Being in prison doesn't make them better off unless there is some intervention in jail.

Since 1995 the Readucate Trust has been running 10-day courses in prisons, training literate volunteer offenders how to teach their illiterate fellow inmates to read. The Readucate language, communication, reading and life skills programme has had the remarkable effect of rehabilitating people who, in turn, train and rehabilitate other prisoners.

Behaviour improves and many learners become excited about studying further. Those who attend Adult Basic Education and Training classes excel through the fundamental knowledge that they gain from Readucate. Many of the Readucate instructors also study further using Readucate study methods. We're extremely proud of many of our ex-offenders who are working in honourable jobs and enjoying a life free of crime.

Two of them will tell you about their experiences. They are Junius Malema and Stanley Ngobeni. I hope that when you have read their stories, you will be convinced that the public mindset needs to be changed from being understandably reluctant to employ ex-criminals, to seeing that it is in the public interest to employ ex-offenders, to help restore their dignity and help them make South Africa crime-free.

We asked Junius and Stanley the following questions:
- What prison were you in and how long were you in jail?
- What were you doing before you went to prison?
- Why did you do the Readucate course in prison?
- How did it help you change as a person?
- How did you feel when you were released?
- What are you doing now and how did you come to be employed?
- How has employment helped you live comfortably and honestly?

Story 1: How poverty coerced me into committing crime and how prison changed my life – Stanley Ngobeni

I think that you have heard it all when it comes to our struggles. How would you feel if you were to face your family every day with nothing to give to them? How would you feel if your children asked for food and you knew there was nothing to give to them? Please let us note that poor people are human. When they feel extremely hungry they will do anything to kill that hunger.

I think that from now on we can change the mindset of ex-offenders. It is not true that all prisoners are not good to the community. Let me share my story with you. In 1987 I joined the South African Police Services. It was the South African Police Force because law and order was supposed to be enforced and to be maintained during the struggle days. I went to Hammanskraal and trained for six months and then I came back in June 1988 and started to work in Protea, Soweto, in the Internal Stability Unit. I started to experience financial problems because I was under-paid and could not make ends meet. I wanted to further my studies, but could not do it. At home we lived in abject poverty. When I got a job as policeman I thought I could deal with financial problems at home, but that was not to be. Problems increased as the family grew. I could not cope with the pressure.

When I got a job as a policeman I thought it was my opportunity to learn while I was working. So I started to learn through Unisa. I was doing the Police Administration courses there. I graduated from Constable to Sergeant in 1989 and in 1990 I graduated from Sergeant to Warrant Officer (now called an Inspector). In 1994 I was a Warrant Officer and we were patrolling in Soweto when I got a radio call that there was a stolen car with registration number plates such-and-such. I was a passenger and started alerting all the guys at the back of the van to start looking for the car colour and the registration number. While we were driving, I saw the car similar to the one that we were looking for and the number plate was similar. I asked the driver of our van to try and hoot because most of the then South African Police Force cars didn't have a siren (or a blue light). Very few of them that have those kind of things and those were used by senior police officers who were white.

Thereafter, when we started to give the warning to the driver of the car driving in front of us but he didn't stop. Then I opened the window. I sat on top of the

window while the car was driving and fired two warning bullets. The driver still didn't stop and I started firing straight. I then hit and fatally injured the driver of the car. I was arrested and given bail of R5 000. I paid it. Thereafter I was prosecuted under the Criminal Procedure Act and was sentenced to 10 years in prison. I appealed. The Appeal Court came to the same conclusion that I must serve the 10 years in prison, the reason being that during the trial the Magistrate asked me to demonstrate how I held the firearm while I was shooting. I demonstrated in the manner in which I'vd been trained and in which the firearm is being handled. The appeal failed and I was sent to South City, the Johannesburg prison, to serve my sentence.

I only served five years sentence there. While I was in prison, in 1997, some of the prisoners started to gather together and say, 'Guys let us just do something in prison because there's no rehabilitation programme being done here.' We then decided to open a school to teach reading and writing up to grade 12 level. The officials at the prison then gave us a chance to open a school. We turned prison kitchens into classes during the morning and in the afternoon they became the kitchen where we were supposed to eat. We continued with our classes until Miss Edna Frankel came in and started to introduce herself to the officials. I was one of the volunteers who volunteered to attend a Readucate course. I have learnt a lot there because at the end of the day I ended up being a teacher of illiterate offenders in prison.

In 2000 I was released after serving five years. I had support from my family and received help from my brother who supplied me with margarine, fish oil, peanut butter and jam for me to sell. He gave me a bakkie and said I could carry on and see what I could do for a living. I kept in touch always with Edna Freinkel, and she introduced me to Ms June Reynolds. She's a wonderful lady. Miss Edna Frankel introduced me to Miss June Reynolds in 2002. Miss June Reynolds was looking at ex-offenders to employ them. So I went there for an interview where she accepted me and gave me the chance to prove myself.

I worked with her in 2002 and 2003 as a driver. In 2004 she had a partner by the name of Erich Beacon. At the end of 2004 Erich Beacon decided to leave and concentrate on other business, so they said we have to look for somebody else who is a reliable, honest and hard-working person. I was one of those to whom they chose to sell shares for the company. They sold 30% of the shares to me, which they said could be payable with whatever I could afford. This is wonderful because today I am a director of Hlangani Recycling and as I speak

now the company is growing with five trucks, two trailers and two private cars, one of which I own. So I'm very, very grateful for Ms June Reynolds for giving me an opportunity. I think people should change their mindset and start to give opportunities to ex-offenders. Most ex-offenders want to change their lives. They want to work hard for a better life.

In conclusion, thank you for your attention, interest and trust. You have learnt about ex-offenders and the role positive encouragement, support and belief in one another as human beings can have. Ex-offenders are human beings that need to be given a second chance; as I have been given a second chance and I am very happy about it. We know from a community-based organisations like Readucate that ex-offenders can make a difference. Embrace this change in mindset and see what changes are possible. Today at Hlangani Recycling we've got a third partner, Lele Tol. As you see the three of us here, we are all directors of Hlangani Recycling and I'm very grateful for it. May God bless the ex-offenders.

Story 2: I was criminal and now I am teacher – Junius Malema

My name is Junius Malema. I come from Musina in the Limpopo province, but am currently staying with my aunt at Tembisa, at Sitama Section 47. I would like to answer all the questions and explain everything. I was sentenced to 15 years and six months for armed robbery and I was incarcerated at Venda Thohoyandou Correctional Centre on 7 January 1998. Yes, I did commit crime and even though my victims are not here I want to say sorry for what I did. I am very sorry because I respect those people. I want their dignity to be restored. I want the imbalance caused by the robbery to be addressed as well. After six years at Thohoyandou, I was transferred to Cullinan Zonderwater Prison in Pretoria. A year later, on 6 of January 2006, I was released. I only served seven years.

Before I moved from Thohoyandou prison, I found prison life very difficult in my first year. After that I started engaging in a number of activities. I joined a choir in the first year and was travelling with them. I did a lot of competitions. In the second year I started attending a textile course. I became a fashion designer and I started making other offenders' clothes. In the third year I changed. I started teaching Afrikaans because I attended school at Musina

Secondary School, where I passed matric. I was very good at Afrikaans. *So ek het baie Afrikaans gepraat gedurende daai tyd en* ('I spoke a lot of Afrikaans during that time') and I enjoyed teaching grade 12 learners Afrikaans.

After some time, while in prison in 2002, I met Edna Freinkel. Edna Freinkel is the founder and trustee of Readucate and when she came to prison I volunteered to attend a course because I saw this as an opportunity for me to make a change in my life and to contribute positively towards other illiterate ex-offenders because in prison I saw that 80% of those who were in prison didn't know how to read and write and 90% of them were blacks. I am counting males and females. So during my time at Thohoyandou Prison I used to teach eveybody, males and females. Using Readucate principles it was easier for me and in 2003 I got a bursary from Anglo-American and I studied Adult Basic Education and Training and on the 27 July 2004 I graduated. I actually went to Unisa. The prison took me to Unisa and I graduated. I got my first diploma and I came back.

Before my incarceration I was an officer in the South African Defence Force. I joined the force in 1991. Why all this? Why now being an officer? I went to Cape Town. I did an infantry course, I went to Bloemfontein 12 SAI Battalion and 1 SAI Battalion. I went to 12 Potchefstroom. I did motors and all. I was very disciplined, I knew my duty to protect all South Africans from violent crime. But now one can ask, 'Junius, why did you go and commit crime?' You know I had this beautiful wife and she was always nagging, 'Hey I want this house. Hey I want this cellphone. I want this, I want that…' You know I don't blame her, we love that stuff. She was just expressing her desires. And as husband I had to provide. It's not an excuse that I committed crime because of my wife. I loved her, but you know I went into debt. I was sinking deep and you know all the frustration. My pay was not enough. Even though I was earning R4 000 at that time, it was not enough. I could not support my family. I had to pay my bond, childrens' school fees, transport to work, buy groceries, pay instalments on my furniture and pay for water and electricity.

At the end of the day I was left with something like R300. I was in debt and I was really frustrated and unfortunately I met a bad friend and he said, 'You know, Junius, it's easy to make bucks. You are in the military you can bring your gun, we can do something.' Under all this confusion I was tempted and I committed armed robbery. I regret it. I attended Readucate because I saw this as a wonderful opportunity to gain more skills in order to make

a positive contribution towards the rehabilitation of my fellow offenders. I always felt this passion that illiteracy was denying millions of our population the opportunity to advance their lives and live better. I see illiteracy as a major factor contributing to poverty and violent crime.

Personally, I salute Readucate who unlocked my potential through their course for the benefit of my fellow inmates. I believe that to apply Readucate principles like memory training and reading skills enabled me to advance in education. I want to thank Edna Freinkel, even though she was not there, because after my release at Zonderwater prison I continued to work closely with her until she introduced me to Xolisa. Xolisa is a NGO is located in Rosebank in Johannesburg. 'Xolisa' means to grow. This NGO is going out into the communities, prisons and schools and implementing crime-prevention initiative programmes. I was taught in a number of programmes and I went to my community in Tembisa because I saw that I must go and do community work and show my community that I've really changed. I want to make a contribution.

So I went back and I did research. I went to the police. I went to the Community Policing Fourm. I went to the Metro Police. I talked to a Superintendent there, Kgomotso Aphane. I went to all the schools. I went to the hospital. I conducted my research and I found that people were very worried about crime. So I said, 'I'm coming back after this research, I'm coming back. I'm going to work and I'm going to fight crime.' So I went back with Xolisa staff and they implemented a project called 'Silence the Violence' and I was taught that programme. That programme taught some school principals that crime is learnt and that crime can be un-learnt. They also introduced restorative justice processes wherein a situation is created whereby victims are empowered to participate effectively with their offenders. So I completed the programme and on 22 November 2006 I went to Regina Munde Church in Rockville, Soweto, where I publicly made a speech in front of the media and the people and we promised the community that we were going out there to work in 2007 and we were going to target 300 000 learners in schools all over the country.

Contributors

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