

# RESPONDING TO THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF POST-SCHOOL YOUTH

DETERMINING THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM AND DEVELOPING A CAPACITY-BUILDING MODEL

Edited by Nico Cloete



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## CHAPTER 1

# Synthesis

Nico Cloete

### Introduction

Recent work done by the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET) has made it clear that – through a number of policy choices, such as closing teaching and nursing colleges, tough restrictions on private higher education and the mergers of universities and technikons – ‘higher education’ in South Africa has primarily become a ‘university’ sector. The current post-school education and work environment could therefore be characterised as one of a:

- Large annual outflow of students without meaningful further educational opportunities.
- Post-school institutional architecture which limits further educational opportunities for young people.
- Lack of integrated and systematic data about the ‘excluded youth’.
- Recapitalised FET college sector that requires capacity building.

A joint proposal between CHET and the Further Education and Training Institute (FETI) to the South African Department of Education (DoE)<sup>1</sup> and the Ford Foundation was developed with the following intended outcomes:

- A ‘scoping’ report that integrates data from a range of sources, which will be the first to provide an integrated picture of the need and provision of education for out-of-school youth.
- A report analysing the pilot projects attempting to link higher education (HE) and Further Education and Training (FET) institutions in South Africa, and analysing similar international initiatives.
- A proposal on a possible national framework to facilitate greater and more structured interaction between universities and FET colleges.
- A workable model for utilising a variety of capacities in the university sector to build corresponding capacities in the FET sector .
- That the results of the project will not only be useful to the national government, but also to universities, FET colleges, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and funders.

There are three distinctive but linked components to the study, which correspond to the chapters in this volume:

- ‘Scoping the Need for Post-School Education’ by Charles Sheppard and Nico Cloete (CHET, May 2009). Available at [http://www.chet.org.za/webfm\\_send/557](http://www.chet.org.za/webfm_send/557)
- ‘The Demand for Tertiary Education in South Africa’ by Nicola Branson, Murray Leibrandt and Tia Linda Zuze (SALDRU, August 2009). Available at [http://www.chet.org.za/webfm\\_send/556](http://www.chet.org.za/webfm_send/556)
- ‘Increasing Educational Opportunities for Post NQF Level 4 Learners in South Africa Through the Further Educational and Training College Sector’ by Rolf Stumpf, Joy Papier, Seamus Needham and Heather Nel (CHET, May 2009). Available at [http://www.chet.org.za/files/u2/Report\\_CHET\\_Youth\\_Final\\_Short\\_Report.pdf](http://www.chet.org.za/files/u2/Report_CHET_Youth_Final_Short_Report.pdf)

### Sample

The 2007 Statistics South Africa Community Survey (StatsSA 2007a) unit record data set was used as the main data source for the analysis, since it was the most recent and most comprehensive national data set available that contains the necessary data elements. The 2007 Community Survey collected data on: population size; composition and distribution; migration; fertility and morbidity; disability and social grants; school attendance and educational attainment; labour force and income. A total of 274 348 dwelling units were randomly sampled (StatsSA 2007a).

### Overview of education in South Africa

It was decided to analyse the 18–24 age cohort, on recommendation from the DoE, since this is the age cohort referred to by UNESCO in terms of participation in post-school education. The records of 5 599 337 persons for 1996, 6 253 197 persons for 2001, and 6 758 366 for 2007 were identified as between 18 and 24 years old. The analysis looked at educational attendance, level of education obtained, employment status, occupation, and levels of unemployment, as well as the number of persons within this age cohort who were not attending educational institutions, were not employed at a level appropriate for their level of education, and were not prevented from working or attending education as a result of severe disability.

For a more comprehensive overview of education in South Africa, see Chapter 2 by Charles Sheppard and Nico Cloete.

#### Enrolments in the education system

Table 1.1 shows the number of enrolments by sector in South African education in 2007.

#### Changing trends in educational participation

Table 1.2 shows that the participation rates of 5–17-year-olds in education has consistently increased over the period 2002 to 2007. Table 1.3 shows that the participation rates of 18–24-year-olds in education have remained similar, but with a downward trend towards 2007.

**Table 1.1**  
Composition of South African education (2007)

Education sector	Enrolments
Public schools	12 048 821
Independent schools	352 396
Higher education institutions (HEIs)	761 087
Public FET colleges	320 679
Public Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) institutions	292 734
Early childhood development centres	289 312
Special schools	102 057
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14 167 086</b>

Source: DoE (2009)

**Table 1.2**  
Attendance at an educational institution amongst persons aged 5 to 17 years (2002–2007)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Percentage 5–17-year-olds attending an educational institution	88.9%	90.6%	92.4%	92.8%	92.4%	91.7%

Source: StatsSA (2007a), StatsSA (2002–2007b)

**Table 1.3**  
Attendance at an educational institution amongst persons aged 18 to 24 years (2002–2007)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Percentage 18–24 -year-olds attending an educational institution	37%	38.2%	38.0%	37.9%	36.9%	35.3%

Source: StatsSA (2007a), StatsSA (2002–2007b)

The lack of an increase in participation for the 18–24-year-old age group severely affects the life opportunities of young people. Table 1.4 shows the dramatic reduction of those who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) as level of education improves. It shows that the two ‘worst’ things that can happen to a student is (i) to drop out of school between Grades 10–12 (990 794) and (ii) to get matric without a matric exemption (500 000). It also demonstrates the dramatic decline in unemployment and lack of further education as students proceed beyond Grade 12.

**Table 1.4**  
Number not in employment, education or training (2002–2007)

Level of education	Total
Primary or less	500 662
Secondary, less than Grade10	508 597
Grade 10 and less than Grade 12	990 794
Grade 12 without exemption	598 657
Grade 12 with exemption	98 335
Grade 12 with Certificate	47 294
Grade 12 with Diploma	25 294
Bachelors degrees and B Tech degrees	11 132
Post graduate diploma	2 498
Honours degree	1 695
Masters/PhD	420

Source: StatsSA (2007a)

## Returns to educational attainment

For a more comprehensive overview of the returns on education attainment, see Chapter 3 by Nicola Branson, Murray Leibbrandt and Tia Linda Zuze.

### Increased earnings for the employed

The South African Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) estimated the determinants of log monthly earnings using an ordinary least squares regression model. The variable of interest is level of education, categorised as degree, diploma or certificate, matric only and incomplete schooling. They assess the effect a matric, diploma/certificate or degree qualification has on earnings in comparison to having incomplete schooling.

Individuals who complete matric (Grade 12) have earnings which, at the mean, are between 40% and 70% higher than individuals with less schooling. The return from obtaining a diploma/certificate is even higher at between 170% and 220%; while the average individual with a degree is rewarded between 250% and 400% higher earnings than their counterparts who did not complete matric. There is thus an incremental increase in rate of return for HE levels. The Western Cape and Gauteng provinces have the highest returns in each year (not shown here).

These returns are quantified in rands in Table 1.5 below, which presents the estimated average earnings 25-year-old, non-unionised African employees from the Western Cape would receive given their education level.

#### KEY FACT:

#### Monthly earnings estimates in 2000:

- Incomplete schooling R1 100
- Matriculants R1 600
- Diploma or certificate R3 200
- Degree R5 500

**Table 1.5**

Estimated average earnings in rands for 25-year-old, non-unionised Africans from the Western Cape

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>Male</b>	less than matric	658.32	746.78	748.49	855.45	999.56	1 097.87	1 124.92	1 275.96
	matric only	1 009.50	1 197.10	1 096.03	1 266.63	1 519.11	1 633.23	1 679.67	1 853.86
	diploma/certificate	1 812.95	2 054.50	2 372.27	2 753.02	2 998.68	3 031.90	3 141.44	3 611.75
	degree	2 847.32	2 672.99	2 951.53	2 798.94	4 071.12	5 586.37	5 217.35	6 322.68
<b>Female</b>	less than matric	472.87	530.69	551.55	624.47	752.17	769.23	909.05	927.61
	matric only	725.12	850.69	807.64	924.63	1 143.13	1 144.33	1 357.34	1 347.74
	diploma/certificate	1 302.24	1 459.98	1 748.07	2 009.67	2 256.50	2 124.32	2 538.60	2 625.71
	degree	2 045.23	1 899.50	2 174.91	2 043.19	3 063.51	3 914.13	4 216.14	4 596.53

Note: Estimated monthly earnings calculated from the model in Table 1a for 25-year-old, non-unionised African wage earners from the Western Cape.

Differences in the return to HE level increase over time. For matric, the return appears to have remained fairly stable over time, while the return to a diploma or certificate

qualification and a degree increased marginally. In 2000, the average individual with a degree earned a salary 320% higher than individuals with less than matric. For the group in Table 1.5, this translates into a R2 200 difference for males and a R1 500 difference for females. By 2007, this had increased to a difference of over 370%; which translates to a difference of R5 000 for males and R3 500 for females. For those with diploma or certificate qualifications, the rate of return was 180% in 2000 and increased to 210% in 2007.

#### Increased employment opportunities

Individuals with a matric or tertiary-level education are significantly more likely to be in formal employment in all years, while matric and tertiary qualifications do not distinguish the self-employed from the unemployed. Matriculants are between *30% and 60% more likely* to be formally employed than individuals with less than matric and individuals who have completed some level of tertiary study are between *two and three times* as likely to be formally employed. Thus some level of tertiary qualification nearly doubles the advantage of finding employment when compared to a matric certificate.

Figure 1.1 presents these results graphically. It is clear from the graph that the ability to find employment with a tertiary qualification is well above the opportunities created by a matric certificate. There appear to have been marginal increases in the return of finding formal employment as a result of completing matric and tertiary education over the eight-year period, especially for tertiary scholars. In 2000, individuals with a tertiary education were twice as likely to be formally employed compared to individuals with less than matric. By 2007 this had increased to around three times. Completing matric had a fairly constant effect on the probability of finding formal employment between 2001 and 2006. It also had a significant positive effect on being self-employed.

#### The overstatement of graduate unemployment

UCT academic Haroon Borhat influenced the Department of Finance and the Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) with his claims of there being up to a 100 000 unemployed 'graduates'.<sup>2</sup> This claim has led, amongst other things, to the National Treasury restricting the expansion of HE. The key graduate unemployment statistics for 2007 are:

- There were 15 745 graduates unemployed and not studying.
- The number breakdown by level of tertiary education was as follows: 9 352 university, 1 780 BTech, 2 498 PG Diplomas, 1 695 Honours, 420 Masters and PhD.
- There were 72 329 matriculants with diplomas/certificates unemployed.

Of concern is what appears to be a worrisome trend in graduate unemployment: **8 581** in 1996, **6 061** in 2001, **15 745** in 2007.

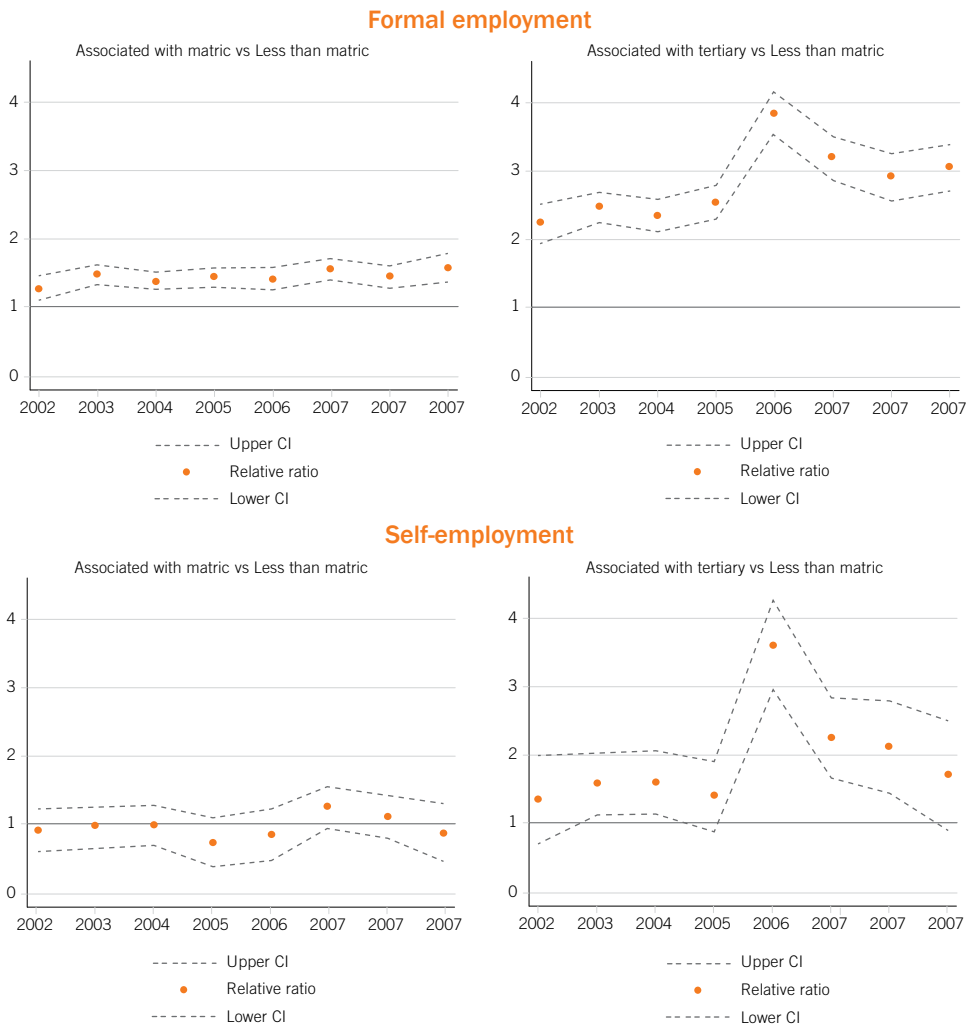
#### KEY FACT:

**In 2000, individuals with a tertiary education were twice as likely to be formally employed compared to individuals with less than matric. By 2007 this had increased to around three times.**

The above data show that during the early 2000s when Borhat was ‘warning’ the government about graduate unemployment, there were only 6 061 (2001) unemployed graduates in this group. Borhat conflated ‘graduates’ with ‘HE’ and his figures were grossly inflated by post-school diplomas and certificates, which consisted of ‘private’ college certificates, and teaching and nursing diplomas. The restructuring in health and education in the late 1990s resulted in many of these teachers and nurses being made redundant. Of concern is that graduate unemployment doubled between 2001 and 2007, and that a post-matric diploma/certificate does not have the same rate of employment as a degree – although it is much higher than for people with less than Grade 12. It is key to remember Leibbrandt’s (this volume) finding that obtaining a post-Grade 12 qualification dramatically improves a student’s opportunity to become employed or self-employed.

One simple message from this is: improve post-secondary school educational participation.

**Figure 1.1**  
Returns to schooling – finding employment



Source: SALDRU data and analysis

\* Multinomial Logit (formal employment, self-employment, unemployment) controlling for population group, gender, marital statuses, province and a quadratic age included

Note: Matric and tertiary point estimates (dots) with 95% confidence intervals (dashed lines) presented

### Participation in tertiary education

The discussion above presents overwhelming positive evidence about the importance of participating in tertiary education, but who participates and what are the constraints? The SALDRU study asked the question: 'Who goes into tertiary education and how has this changed since 2000?' The StatsSA General Household Survey data show that there have been increases in the absolute numbers of students enrolled in tertiary institutions, but that these increases are only in line with population growth. Nor were there changes found in age, gender and racial breakdowns. There has therefore been little demographic transformation in tertiary education. There has, however, been a shift in the type of tertiary training that young South Africans have been acquiring. Colleges have held a constant share, while universities have increased their share relative to universities of technology.

Controlling for a range of characteristics, including socioeconomic status (SES), whites have a greater odds than Africans of attending university rather than college, in all years. In addition, this difference in the odds between Africans and whites appears to have increased over the period 2002 to 2007. In 2002, whites were just over twice as likely to be enrolled in university rather than college compared to Africans. By 2007 the difference has increased to over three-and-a-half times. No other significant population group differences are observed in the choices of tertiary institutions. Taking into account other factors, coloureds are as likely as Africans to attend university over college, and there is no significant difference in the odds of attending university of technology over college between population groups.

Comparing tertiary institution choice across gender, they show that females are less likely to attend either university or university of technology than college when compared to males. Access to different tertiary institutions is constrained by financial resources and whether the individual meets the entry requirements. Generally universities have the highest fees and entrance requirements. Over and above other factors, increased SES leads to much higher probabilities of participating at either a university or a university of technology over a college.

Access to a bursary is an even stronger factor in the choice of tertiary institution. Similarly, individuals who receive bursaries are between 200% and 350% more likely to attend a university than a college, controlling for demographic characteristics, marital status and SES level. Similarly, individuals with bursaries are between 100% and 300% more likely to attend a university of technology over a college. Between 2002 and 2007, the influence of bursaries on the choice of tertiary institution appears to have diminished, especially in the choice between a university of technology and a college.

Much of the evidence in this report points to profound inequalities in accessing and benefitting from HE. In some cases, these trends appear to be stagnant or even worsening over time. A striking disparity existed between men and women in terms

#### KEY FACT:

**In 2002 whites were twice as likely to be in a university, and by 2007 three-and-a-half times as likely.**

of wage returns for investment in schooling, with women at a clear disadvantage. Women also continue to lag behind men in terms of formal employment. This pattern has remained unchanged over time.

Although the actual numbers of students enrolled in tertiary study increased during the reporting period, this matched patterns of population growth. Therefore, in real terms, participation and completion rates actually remained constant. Still, other trends pointed to a worsening of inequality. Although participation in universities has increased, the study showed that white candidates were more likely than African candidates to attend university rather than college, after controlling for other background factors (see Chapter 3). The gap appeared to be increasing with time. For African young adults, ability alone proved insufficient to bridge the gap between secondary school and tertiary studies. Unfavourable school and home environments overshadow individual ability. This is not the case for the white and coloured population groups. However, for all young adults, educational attainment and outcomes are still heavily dependent on financial resources. The unequal home, community and educational circumstances of the African population place them at a distinct disadvantage long before they enter the labour market.

**KEY FACT:**

**For African young adults, unfavourable school and home environments overshadow individual ability.**

In summary, the research shows that:

- There is a dramatic reduction of those in the NEET category, as level of education improves. The ‘worst’ thing that can happen to a student is to drop out of school between Grades 10–12 (990 794 in NEET).
- Earnings improve with level of education, increasing substantially between those who have a matric and those who have a degree. For example, during 2007, African, non-unionised male workers from the Western Cape who had a matric earned on average R1 900 per month, while those with a diploma/certificate or degree earned R3 600 and R6 300, respectively.
- There are substantial gender differences – in 2007 a woman (from the example group given above) with a diploma earned R980 per month less than a male; with a degree the difference was R1 700.
- Tertiary study has high returns to both securing a formal job and self-employment – pupils with tertiary education are twice as likely to be formally employed when compared to those with incomplete secondary schooling.
- Between 2000 and 2007 there have been increases in returns in terms of both finding formal employment and higher earnings, signalling the growing importance of studying further.
- There have been marginal increases in the earnings returns to diploma/certificate and degree qualifications between 2000 and 2007.

- There has been little demographic transformation in who participates in tertiary education – whites have a far greater odds of attending HE and the difference seems to be increasing.
- Profound inequalities in accessing and benefiting from tertiary education remain – and in some cases (race and gender), these trends appear to be either stagnant or even worsening over time.
- Financial aid has a significant influence, both on type of institution attended and who attends – for African young adults unfavourable school and home (financial) environments affect educational attainment, crowding out the role of individual ability.

**KEY FACT:**

**There are hugely positive returns to tertiary education, which increased from 2000 to 2007.**

### The need for education, training and employment

The purpose of the analysis is to determine the number of persons in the 18 to 24 age cohort who are in need of a second-chance education. In order to get to this result the following persons were excluded from the age group cohort:

- All students and scholars (persons attending an education institution).
- All employed people.
- All persons who could not work or attend mainstream education because of poor health or severe disability.

The key statistics from Tables 1.6 and 1.7 are that of the 6 758 366 in the 18–24 age group in 2007, there were 2 812 471 who were not in education/training or employment and not disabled. This figure constituted:

- **41.6%** of 18–24 age group.
- **50.7%** of 23 and 24 age group.
- **47.2%** (1 604 727) of the total women in this age group, and **36%** (1 207 744) of the total men in this age group
- **44%** (2 452 949) of the total African population in this age group, and **41%** (239 556) of the total coloured population in this age group.

We note from this data that ‘structural’ inequality continues – the worst affected being Africans and women.

Some of the reasons identified for NEET are:

- Lack of a post-school public or private ‘college’ sector.
- Reduction of educational opportunities through consolidation (mergers) in the system.
- Tight restrictions on private provision.

- Failure of the sector education and training authorities (SETAs).
- Reduction in labour market absorption due to South Africa not meeting the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA) aims of 6% growth.
- The uncontrolled introduction of more than two million foreign workers with relatively good education into the labour market.

**Table 1.6**

Number not employed, not in education and not severely disabled in 18–24 age cohort (2007)

Age	Total population	Number not in education, not employed and not severely disabled	Percentage of population in age group not in education, not employed and not severely disabled
18	1 002 363	241 056	24.00%
19	964 195	305 333	31.70%
20	981 625	393 441	40.10%
21	990 984	455 434	46.00%
22	961 272	474 501	49.40%
23	914 732	464 119	50.70%
24	943 195	478 587	50.70%
Total	6 758 366	2 812 471	41.60%

Source: StatsSA (2007a)

**Table 1.7**

Not employed, not in education and not severely disabled 18–24 age cohort (2007)

Level of qualification	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Total
Unspecified	2 595	2 457	3 786	4 762	4 998	4 054	4 699	27 351
Primary or less	61 056	64 285	70 496	78 564	73 575	75 261	77 425	500 662
Secondary education less than Grade 10 or Std 8	51 192	59 643	73 194	79 050	83 367	81 502	80 649	508 597
Grade 10/Std 8 or higher but less than Grade 12/ Std 10	65 228	94 608	132 158	164 596	176 733	174 325	183 146	990 794
Grade 12/Std 10/NTCIII (without university exemption)	47 447	65 190	89 292	99 797	100 711	96 139	100 080	598 657
Grade 12/Std 10 (with university exemption)	10 226	13 526	14 778	14 259	16 910	13 869	14 766	98 335
Certificate with Std 10/Gr 12	2 732	4 025	6 299	8 157	9 672	8 340	7 811	47 035
Diploma with Std 10/Gr 12	388	1 151	2 464	3 461	6 103	5 733	5 995	25 294
Bachelors degree	188	322	430	1 774	1 460	2 831	2 347	9 352
BTech	6	126	192	312	78	654	414	1 780
Post graduate diploma			244	405	400	581	867	2 498
Honours degree			60	220	383	694	337	1 695
Higher degree (Masters/PHD)			48	77	110	135	50	420
<b>Total</b>	<b>241 056</b>	<b>305 333</b>	<b>393 441</b>	<b>455 434</b>	<b>474 501</b>	<b>464 119</b>	<b>478 587</b>	<b>2 812 471</b>

Source: StatsSA (2007a)

## The demand for post-school education and training

The need (demand) for education, training and/or employment amongst the 18–24 age group is exemplified by the following data from the Statistics South Africa 2007 Community Survey (StatsSA 2007a):

- 2 812 471 youth in the 18–24 age group (41.6% of total cohort) not in education, not employed and not severely disabled.
- 990 000 youth who qualify for further education and training.
- 700 000 youth in the pool for post-secondary HE (in 2007 the total enrolment in the higher education system was 760 000).
- There were 58 000 post-matics in elementary occupations needing 'training'.
- There were 1 009 000 18–24-year-olds unemployed with a qualification of less than Grade 10 (Std 8) in need of training and jobs.

Having almost three million youth between 18 and 24 unemployed and not in education or training, points not only to a grave wastage of talent, but to the possibility of serious social disruption. To address this problem is not only the responsibility of the education ministries; it requires a response from the state. Almost one million students leave school after completing Grade 10. Providing ten years of education to youth who do not complete their final two years of schooling is an enormous waste of educational resources, and leaves this group extremely vulnerable to unemployment. This group clearly requires multi 'second-chance' school opportunities, of which FET is but one (albeit a very important possibility that should be expanded).

An equally serious problem is the 700 000 youth who complete Grade 12 and then cannot continue improving their education. In terms of educational efficiency this is a shocking 'wastage of educational investment' – and a loss of opportunity, as SALDRU returns on education investment shows fairly dramatic increases in returns for those who acquire tertiary education. This group would normally be absorbed into a mixture of post-school colleges (public and private), training schemes and employment. Although these are all potential 'post-secondary' students, accommodating them in educational institutions would require a doubling of the current higher education system (for capacity of around 760 000). In providing educational opportunities for this group it is important to stress that this function could not be fulfilled by a college system for access to universities – the university system will not be able to cope with such an influx, both in terms of physical and human resource capacity.

### KEY FACTS:

**In summary, there are:**

**Almost 1 million pupils who need multiple second-chance opportunities.**

**700 000 pupils who have matric and need further education and training.**

**Another 1 million who need a variety of employment, training and youth service opportunities.**

Last, but not least, is the one million youth requiring a multitude of opportunities – short-term training, internships, public works programmes, youth service, etc. This will have to be a coordinated, multi-departmental response from the state.

### Some potential responses to the challenge facing South Africa

For a more comprehensive overview on potential responses to the challenges facing HE in South Africa, see Chapter 4 by Rolf Stumpf, Joy Papier, Seamus Needham and Heather Nel.

#### HE–FET college interaction

HE–FET college interaction in our country has never really taken off. In part this is due to the apartheid government's past education policies, but it is also due to the fact that South Africa has never had an integrated post-secondary education system which supports strengthened and planned interaction and linkages between institutions such as universities, FET colleges, agricultural colleges, nursing colleges and teacher education colleges.

The Stumpf *et al.* case study of eight existing examples of HE–FET college interaction revealed that these interactions:

- Have not resulted in any significant articulation of qualifications between these two sectors.
- Have had limited success in providing access to HE through FET colleges.
- Typically depended on champions in the respective institutions to initiate and maintain such interaction – when these champions move on, the interactions invariably tend to collapse.
- Been rendered less effectual through the low levels of institutional autonomy of FET colleges as well as them being a provincial competence.

#### Capacity-building in the FET college sector

A number of issues exist which would require some steps to be taken, in most cases to be initiated by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DoHET), in order for any of these models to have a reasonable chance of success. Some of these steps are:

- The development of a set of broad national guidelines and policies advancing HE–FET college collaboration.
- Establishing greater levels of coordination between all role-players involved with FET colleges and HE.
- Achieving clarity on admission to HE on the basis of National Certificate (Vocational) (NC (V)) learning programmes.
- The development of memoranda of understanding between the three quality councils established in terms of the new National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Act, Act 67 of 2008: Umalusi Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, the Quality Council for Trade and Occupations (QCTO), and the Council on Higher Education Quality Committee (CHE (HEQC)).

- Achieving clarity on the effects of any HE-FET collaboration on the enrolment planning targets set by the DoHET for higher education institutions (HEIs).
- Stimulating any form of HE and FET college collaboration through the allocation of funds specifically earmarked for the support of such collaborative ventures.
- The development of both short- and long-term approaches towards improving the quality of academic staff at FET colleges. A possible short-term approach would be the development of HE-FET staff exchange programmes.

The models for increasing advanced educational opportunities for young people through the FET college sector presented here fall into two categories: those within the framework of the new FET College Act of 2006 (Model 1 and Model 3), and those which would require some amendments to this Act and possibly to some other education legislation as well (Models 2, 4 and 5).

*Model 1: HEIs ‘franchising’ FET colleges to offer certain HE programmes on their behalf*

In this model a FET college would be given a ‘franchise’ by a HEI to offer a particular HE learning programme leading to a HE qualification(s) – the qualification would be awarded by the HE institution. The delivery of education relating to the associated learning programme(s) will take place on one of the campuses of the FET college.

Such a franchise function by an FET college will need to be regulated by a comprehensive franchise agreement between the HEI and the FET college – at present established via the province in question.

Although not without its merits, the complexity of the franchise agreement, together with the likely loss of funding for the HEI involved, would render this model unattractive for most HEIs unless additional earmarked funding were to be made available for funding learning programmes offered as part of such franchise arrangements.

*Model 2: Granting selected FET colleges the right to offer a limited number of specific HE qualifications in their own right*

In this model some FET colleges, which satisfy a number of strict criteria, would be given the right to offer a specific set of HE qualifications in their own right. The most appropriate HE qualification for this purpose would be the Higher Certificate. This qualification is a 120 credit, NQF Level 5 qualification, which according to the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF) is primarily an industry or vocationally oriented qualification. Normally the study programme would include a period of work-integrated learning (WIL).

Completion of the Higher Certificate would enable students to proceed to an Advanced Certificate or to a diploma. The minimum entry requirement for the Higher Certificate is a National Senior Certificate. In respect of quality assurance, this Level 5 HE qualification would be accredited by the CHE (HEQC). As an interim measure and on the basis of a formal agreement with a university such as UNISA, the latter could act as certifying authority for such programmes.

*Model 3: Allowing a greater number of post NQF Level 4 trade and occupationally-oriented qualifications to be offered at FET colleges in South Africa*

This model implies that together with their present NC (V) programmes some FET colleges should be given permission to offer a larger number of post NQF Level 4 trade and occupationally-directed learning programmes than is the case at present.

The recently published National Plan for FET Colleges (DoE 2008) does not foresee that headcount enrolments in such programmes, as well as those in adult education programmes and in community based projects, would amount to more than 20% or 30% at the most. FET policy allows for 20% occupational programmes and 80% NCV provision. What's different is that N4–N6 programmes were funded by the DoE, whereas occupational qualifications need funding from SETAs or students. On the basis of another set of criteria, some FET colleges should be given the right to have headcount enrolments in such trade and occupationally-directed programmes for up to 50% of enrolments.

In terms of the NQF Act, Act 67 of 2008, such post NQF Level 4 trade and occupational-oriented learning programmes will be quality assured by the QCTO.

*Model 4: Introducing some fully fledged community colleges in South Africa*

In this model a small number of FET colleges could be considered for development towards fully fledged community colleges as understood in the USA. Apart from encompassing the various aspects of Models 2 and 3, FET colleges designated for this purpose would then also be given the right to offer the first (or even second) year of university study, catering for so-called transfer students.

It is, however, difficult to see how such a system would function effectively in South Africa for two main reasons:

- The absence of well worked out system of general credit accumulation and transfer in our country.
- The fact that in South Africa our first degree at present comprises 360 credits (normally three years of study), compared to the 480 credits (normally four years of study) in the USA. The latter country's practice allows for the so-called 2+2 arrangement in which, for transfer students, community colleges offer the first two years of study and the university the last two years.

*Model 5: Supporting the establishment and existence of some form of private FET colleges*

The quantitative analysis presented earlier clearly shows that the number of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who could benefit from expanded study opportunities at post NQF Level 4 is of such a magnitude that merely strengthening and expanding the public FET sector will not bring about an appreciable solution to the problem of 'unemployed and non-studying' young people in this age bracket. To do this, more FET colleges – possibly in the form of private FET colleges – would have to become involved in presenting post NQF Level 4 learning programmes.

This model thus involves establishing private FET colleges along the lines of the former state-aided schools – as distinct from private schools, which enjoy greater levels of autonomy but also receive less government funding.

### Enabling and disabling factors in establishing a strengthened FET college system

A number of enabling factors exist at present for strengthening our FET college system. Unfortunately, a few disabling factors will also have to be addressed in pursuing such a FET system.

#### Enabling factors

- A comprehensive set of policies governing learning programmes and funding arrangements exists, and there are national plans for both HE and the FET college sector.
- Both the HE and the FET college sector have undergone a radical restructuring of their respective institutional landscapes, a process which is now drawing to a close.
- Arrangements are underway to grant FET colleges greater levels of institutional autonomy.
- The NQF Act, Act 67 of 2008 establishes three separate quality councils which will facilitate articulation of qualifications and movement of students between the various education and training sectors in our country;.
- The inception of the HEQF has created meaningful opportunities for involvement of FET colleges in HE at NQF Level 5.
- Both the HE and FET college sectors have received significant government funding for infrastructural renewal over the past few years.
- The establishment of a single Ministry for HE and Training will advance policy and implementation co-ordination between HE and FET colleges.

#### Disabling factors

- Lack of harmonisation and synchronisation between some HE and some FET college policies.
- Generally low levels of academic staff capacity and quality in FET colleges.
- Removal of existing N4–N6 programmes from FET colleges and the absence of any clear replacement for them at present.
- FET colleges as a shared national and provincial competence complicates any HE–FET college interaction.
- Some FET colleges have low levels of management capacity and some FET college campuses are sub-optimal in terms of their size.
- Both the HE and the FET college sectors are subject to significant funding constraints at present.
- The absence of a national framework of guidelines and principles governing credit accumulation and transfer (CAT).

#### KEY FACT:

**There is a lack of harmonisation and synchronisation between some HE and FET college policies.**

### The developmental state

The response to the crisis of post-school 18–24-year-old youth is not only the responsibility of the DoE. It will involve expanding a range of educational and training (plus internship) opportunities, as well as expanded employment and special youth service programmes. This will require a coordinated response from a developmental state.

After the 2003 election a number of ministers, including the then education minister, Naledi Pandor, declared South Africa a developmental state. However, what the above shows is that South Africa is more of an example of a state of uneven development, as the following development contradictions illustrate:

- Increased output from improved participation in the school system.
- Reduction in post-school educational opportunities and participation.
- Decreasing post-school labour market absorption.
- Collapsed post-school vocational training.
- **BUT increasing returns on attainment of tertiary education.**

In a review of the substantial literature on the development state, Meredith Woo-Cummings (Woo-Cummings 1999) argues that the two central components of successful developmental states are:

#### 1. Coordination

- Intra-departmental.
- Inter-departmental.
- Horizontal – across constituencies being more important than top-down.

#### 2. Institution Building

- Integration: interdependence, consistency, coherence and structural connectedness.
- Human resource capacity development.

### Principles for widening access

It is proposed that the three central principles for widening access are:

- **Coordination** between national departments and within the DoE (inter and intra) because the scale of this problem requires a response from the state, not only the DoHET. It is also important that the DoHET align its own policies.
- **Differentiation** – ‘one size fits all’ policies will not work; there has to be policy, funding, function and programme differentiation.
- **Flexibility** – the system has to be flexible to accommodate learner, institutional and labour market differences.

## Recommendations

### Recommendation 1: A Ministry of Education-led task group

The establishment of a task team or working group by the Ministry of Higher Education and Training (DoHET) that will:

- Interact with other government departments to address the socio-economic problem of 41% of 18–24-year-olds being NEET.
- Strengthen the FET college sector through increased HE–FET collaboration and expanding the mandate of FET colleges.
- Develop approaches to increase participation in tertiary education, with particular attention to increasing participation rates amongst the identified disadvantaged groups.
- Investigate and elaborate different models and associated policies (about a regulatory framework, programmes, admissions, quality assurance, certification and funding) towards developing a multi-model approach to ‘college’ provision.
- Make the necessary recommendations for expanding the post-school education and training system.

### Recommendation 2: A research support group<sup>3</sup>

Expand the existing expert project group whose task will be to support the DoHET task group to, amongst other things, undertake:

- Further analysis of the census data sets.
- Analysing and cleaning up the FET database.
- More detailed work about a framework for broadening HE–FET, including some cost scenarios.
- An analysis by an economist group to look at what other countries have done with NEET.
- A preliminary analysis on the numbers, and costs, involved in the SETAs.
- Some reflections on what ‘training’ could mean in a Department of Higher Education and Training.

## Conclusion: Idle minds, social time bomb

In 2009, the Minister of Higher Education quoted from an earlier draft of this Synthesis in his budget speech on education. This drew the attention of journalists and in the *Mail & Guardian* of 31 July 2009, Primarashni Gower published a piece titled ‘Idle Minds, Social Time Bomb’ (Gower 2009). The *Mail & Guardian* report was also referenced in the *New York Times*, but in both cases the focus was not on education and skills, but on the potential of 2.8 million youths not in education, employment or training to cause serial social disruption (Gower 2009). The researchers found this unfortunate, as the focus of the study was on empirical evidence regarding being not in education, employment or training – not social disruption. But the latest South African crime statistics<sup>4</sup> do however produce a rather sobering possible ‘connection’. These statistics state that the average age of a house robber is between 19 and 25 years (our study is about 18–24-year-olds) and finds that of all arrested robbers, 90% had no matric or were unemployed.

## Endnotes

- 1 It is noted that, in terms of the new dispensation, the former Department of Education is now known as the Department of Higher Education and Training.
- 2 Haroon Bhorat is currently the director of the Development Policy Research Unit at UCT and professor in the School of Economics. His work influenced JIPSA and was repeatedly quoted by President Mbeki <http://74.125.95.132/search?q=cache:bsb0MdkPpgIJ:www.cs.ru.ac.za/ICTSkills/DilloLehlokoePresentation.pdf+haroon+bhorat+unemployed+graduates&cd=6&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=za>
- 3 In May 2009 the Ford Foundation approved a grant to FETI and CHET for the establishment of such a research support group.
- 4 Tanya Pretorius: <http://www.tanyapretorius.co.za/content/south%20africa/crime%20statistics.html>.

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