

June 1995: FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENT

For the last three years the Joint Education Trust has been funding NGOs involved in youth job-skills programmes. JET has to date committed more than R44m to over 45 youth projects. Along with many other stakeholders, JET identified a major problem - millions of school drop-outs, unskilled and demotivated, for whom few education programmes offered routes to employment or income.

During the three years of working with projects offering a wide range of programmes, JET has learned important lessons, and we have an idea today of what works and why.

Many important areas of youth development are not funded by JET. For example, social and recreational facilities and support; sports and religious activities; formal academic programmes as well as matric catch-up, rewrites or in-school supplementary programmes: all play a crucial role in stabilising and motivating youth especially those deemed "marginalised".

In-school programmes, particularly those directed towards re-orienting the curriculum to business practices and work experience, are also not supported by JET.

Increasingly, the formal state-funded training institutions will need to direct their efforts towards these priorities.

JET's priority is a focused attempt to provide skills that lead directly to employment

## YOUTH JOB-SKILLS PROGRAMMES



## WHAT WORKS AND WHY

by Graeme Bloch,  
Project Officer, JET

or income generation for young people who have fallen out of the school system. While the Trust also supports adult basic and further education programmes aimed at enabling young adults to progress to higher level work and study opportunities, these priorities are not discussed in this article.

### SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS What makes them work

A number of JET projects that have been successful in piloting new ideas or expanding services are noted in this newsletter. It is important to avoid formulae when assessing what makes such programmes "work". Local conditions, particular personalities, or very specific histories, can come into play.

Nonetheless, all of the NGOs identified as successful have established themselves as effective and professional delivery vehicles, in both their administrative and educational capacities. These organisations have demonstrated the value of eschewing over-ambitious or glamorous schemes, choosing instead to establish success with small-scale, focused pilots before expanding their services.

Committed and experienced project leadership, a broad vision, and the maturity to



draw on a range of networks and resources are also hallmarks of success.

Peer support, and involvement of youth leaders, even at planning levels, have been shown to be important. However, the reach and experience that youth leadership can provide in



### **SLOT,**

School Leavers Opportunity Training, in rural Natal adjusts its courses to suit local conditions and gears its training to the knowledge and assumptions of its target audience. A general "survival" course leads to intensive residential skills training for those selected, of whom between 30% and 40% find some sort of employment. SLOT offers professional and quality courses ranging from chicken farming and dress making to motor mechanics and word processing. Many courses are accredited with various training institutions. SLOT is beginning to expand throughout Natal from a firm base. It is exploring partnerships with organisations such as the Valley Trust, where an Outward Bound course is being piloted as part of the life-skills and leadership component of the curriculum.

managing such programmes must be questioned.

In most cases it would also appear that dedication of project staff predominates over wages or the need for substantive career advances. It has been possible to get solid and skilled staffing from traditionally disadvantaged groups, where necessary with specific affirmative action planning. Further, good management systems have ensured proper use of staff and organisational development.

Finally, most of the successful programmes have established links with formalised training institutions: this link, and the strengthening of the formal training sector within an integrated qualifications system, are keys to quality control and delivery to scale.

All of the NGOs delivering successful youth programmes are fairly localised. The US experience is instructive here. The state-run Job Corps programmes, a form of residential training brigades, have proved among the very few successful models. It would seem likely, therefore, that delivery on any significant scale can only be managed through structures of government, where an accountable network of development officials can institute properly audited programmes to standard with local variation, and where clear roles and capacities are allocated within an integrated training sector.

## **A GOOD YOUTH JOB-SKILLS PROGRAMME**

**W**hat of specific provision? What can be said of the internal processes and content of youth job-skills programmes?



### **BERGZICHT**

in Stellenbosch trains semi-literate young women from rural and squatter communities for jobs in the hospitality industry, and in frail care. The programme provides a carefully planned curriculum of "hard skills" and confidence building "soft skills". It has an in-house employment bureau that researches job opportunities and places about 80% of its graduates. Some graduates are now teaching in the programme.

1. The training programmes all rest on a **very particular niche market**, that has been investigated and developed at local level. Everybody in development in South Africa knows the stories of generations of unemployed welders or hosts of unprofitable candle-making schemes. Successful programmes research the local economy and its possibilities. These are carefully matched with the trainees themselves, and their own particular needs, knowledge and capacities. Options are realistic and practical without being demeaning. A pressing need is not in itself enough to define alternatives.

2. **Training methodologies** too are adapted to the target audience. These are youth largely alienated from traditional schooling and even work-disciplines. Courses thus need to be varied and exciting, with a large base of learner centred and experiential processes. At the same time, empowerment is important: courses need to set clear goals, and formalise their curricula in terms of a set of graduated competencies.

The best courses are also demanding, tough and require discipline, are sympathetic but also firm in their expectations. Poor skills will only let trainees down in the end and dash raised hopes.

### 3. The curriculum needs to be multi-faceted and holistic.

Youth have been buffeted and tempted from all sides and interventions thus need a range of dimensions.

It is not essential for any one particular supplier to service all areas, but the coordination and integration of the various programme components are crucial to successful delivery.

Typically, the curriculum will include all or most of the following:

i) Literacy and/or "academic" catch-up. This improves confidence, ability to handle relevant issues and access to further routes beyond initial training.

ii) Lifeskills. Youth are generally disempowered, lacking the social and cultural capital to get ahead. Language and communication skills, leadership development, time management, and practical skills such as CV writing might be appropriate.

iii) Just as the "soft skills" above are crucial, so too may counselling, conflict resolution



## PROJECT

### KEYBOARDS

in urban Johannesburg provides opportunities to young female drop-outs in the secretarial and office-skills arena. A highly professional course sees over 80% placements. Training includes exposure to business realities as well as cultural outings and communication skills.

skills, and firm adult mentoring be a central part of youths' recovery from the traumas of daily township violence and anomie. Often a strong religious element also provides a moral universe that may be of assistance and support. Post-course peer support is usually essential in assisting participants to implement what they have learnt.

iv) "Hard skills" must be appropriate and flexible, and the training must take the youth from where they are to practical skills that can be used to find or create work. Skills should fit the local economy, or particular programmes such as electrification, or RDP and local government priorities such as roads or construction. Training should be accredited, within a national system as this develops, and help to ensure routes to further study or training as well as likely employment.

v) Many of the skills will find only occasional utilisation in the formal economy. Increasingly, youth will have to find ways to create their own income (as the high crime rate attests, a challenge that many have risen to with admirable precision).

Entrepreneurship training will expose youth to possibilities of self-employment, to planning, marketing and supply-side skills.

vi) At the end of the day, graduates will have to make their own way forward. Nonetheless, it is not good enough for programmes to churn out graduates into the world hoping for the best. Proper course follow-up is required with specific and concerted efforts to secure job placement, access to loans and markets.

A number of NGOs make available their training equipment in an incubator-type situation that also provides a further period of mentored support.

A system of mentorship by local business and internships offered by large companies to provide work experience can be invaluable.

vii) Many NGOs cannot say whether the life prospects of their graduates have in fact improved and what has happened, say, six months or a year down the line. Proper statistics need to replace argument by superlative example or impressive but

## YOUTH JOB-SKILLS TRAINING

*Strengthening provision  
and developing policy*

### CONFERENCE

Tuesday 12 September,  
Johannesburg

A panel discussion will identify success factors in current projects.

**Keynote address:**  
**Minister Tito Mboweni**

Further speakers will address:

- ◆ **Professional Service Delivery**  
*to strengthen provision of youth training programmes*
- ◆ **Developing Curricula**  
*to provide for multiple exit points*
- ◆ **The Role of the State**  
*in developing and implementing coordinated policy*

The conference will be of value to anyone active in youth development within government and non-governmental organisations, business and youth centred organisations, including technical colleges and vocational training centres.

**For further information contact:**  
Reservations Hotline  
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individual case-studies. In this regard it is encouraging that, increasingly, proper tracking systems are being put in place.

## WHERE TO FROM HERE?

It seems probable that it is only the state that can provide the coordination and extensive structures to ensure delivery on a scale that is appropriate to the magnitude of the problem.

The lesson of the National Youth Service Initiative has been that large, privately driven processes cannot marshal the resources on a sustainable scale. The over-ambitious plans of the NYSI have hardly left a single pilot on which to base experience and further lessons.

A network of state Youth Development Officers, properly trained and supported within appropriate delivery systems from national to local government levels might begin to generalise the lessons of successful projects. There is a need to redirect many institutions to the skills and capacities required.



### PROJECT

#### CENTRE FOR OPPORTUNITY DEVELOPMENT

provides a three-week participatory entrepreneurial training programme. Follow-up and tracking systems are an integral part of the programme. The Centre claims up to 60% success in improving income and has recently opened a branch in Pietersburg. COD is linking with other organisations as a way of providing an integrated programme of modular courses.



### PROJECT

**BERTRAMS BRIGADES**, in partnership with the Johannesburg City Council and a number of training institutions, has trained young street-children in the skills needed to rebuild and refurbish old houses. The project is contributing to urban renewal in inner-city slums at the same time as providing holistic and accredited training.

It is quite likely that the SMME planning processes currently under way in the Department of Trade and Industry would need to develop a clear youth component that addresses the particular needs of this constituency. The type of one-stop shops envisaged by the SMME programme provides a useful model for the youth field.

However, involvement of the state is not a guarantee of effective, quality delivery, as shown by the lack of vision and flexibility exhibited by many state training institutions.

It is clear that NGOs remain a crucial delivery vehicle, but coordination and integrated delivery will become more important in the new scenario.

Those NGOs that survive will have identified their niche and bring particular skills and professional services to bear. They are most likely to be sensitive to changing local dynamics and have the flexibility to explore and pilot new approaches. They can share experiences, resources, and training programmes.

They also need to play a role within appropriate lobbying fora. Were the NYDF to acknowledge and draw on the

extensive experience that has developed amongst successful NGOs, it could play an important role in generating an enabling and understanding climate amongst stakeholders such as business, the state and others in civil society.

And last but not least, we do need further research. For example, what are likely job options for youth in the immediate future. Have various training programmes improved the income levels of their graduates? How can effective tracking systems be implemented? Beyond the narrow focus on job-skills, what other youth development approaches enhance a supportive environment? How can the formal school system and training institutions be adapted to incorporate the changing needs? What specific needs would young people face in respect of SMMEs? What has been the international experience and what could be applicable in South Africa?

Answers to these questions and a look at the experience to date amongst the many fine service deliverers in our own country, can help us to go forward. Giving real hope to youth by means of jobs and access to further education and training is one of the finest gifts we could leave for future generations. 



### PROJECT

#### DAILY BREAD

in the rural Eastern Cape and **SISTERS OF MERCY** in Mmakau (North West) provide holistic support, literacy and reintegration into mainstream education for primary school drop-outs.

# SCHOOLS RENOVATION PROGRAMME

**J**ET project officer Graeme Bloch was seconded to the Gauteng education department for a period of nine months - September '94 to May this year - as a member of the Strategic Management Team. The Team drew together some ten experts in various fields to advise on the transitional process and to develop and implement a strategy for the regeneration of schooling in the province.

The Schools Renovation Programme formed one element of the overall transitional strategy and Graeme was given the responsibility of setting up and starting the programme for the province.

The programme was launched as a Presidential Lead Project in March, one of about 100 projects identified by the President for special attention. With R11,4 million from central government's RDP office, the Schools Renovation Programme aimed to assist some 1500 deteriorating Gauteng schools to upgrade their facilities - allowing about R8 000 per school.

In order to qualify for assistance under the programme, schools had to have been historically disadvantaged, have a democratic governing body in place and have tried to raise funds themselves. Further, they had to develop a plan and decide on their priorities for upgrading.

By encouraging community involvement and boosting the idea of community ownership

of schools, the programme also aimed to strengthen school governance and to motivate communities to take the initiative in improving their schools.

Workshops and rallies were held across the province - kick-starting a culture of cooperation and dialogue among principals, teachers, pupils, parents and others, inviting them to assess their strengths and weaknesses, to analyse their problems and propose solutions.

"The people realise they are going to have to play their part," he says, "and they are prepared to work hard." Beyond achieving its primary objectives, the Schools Renovation Programme has generated valuable spin-offs.

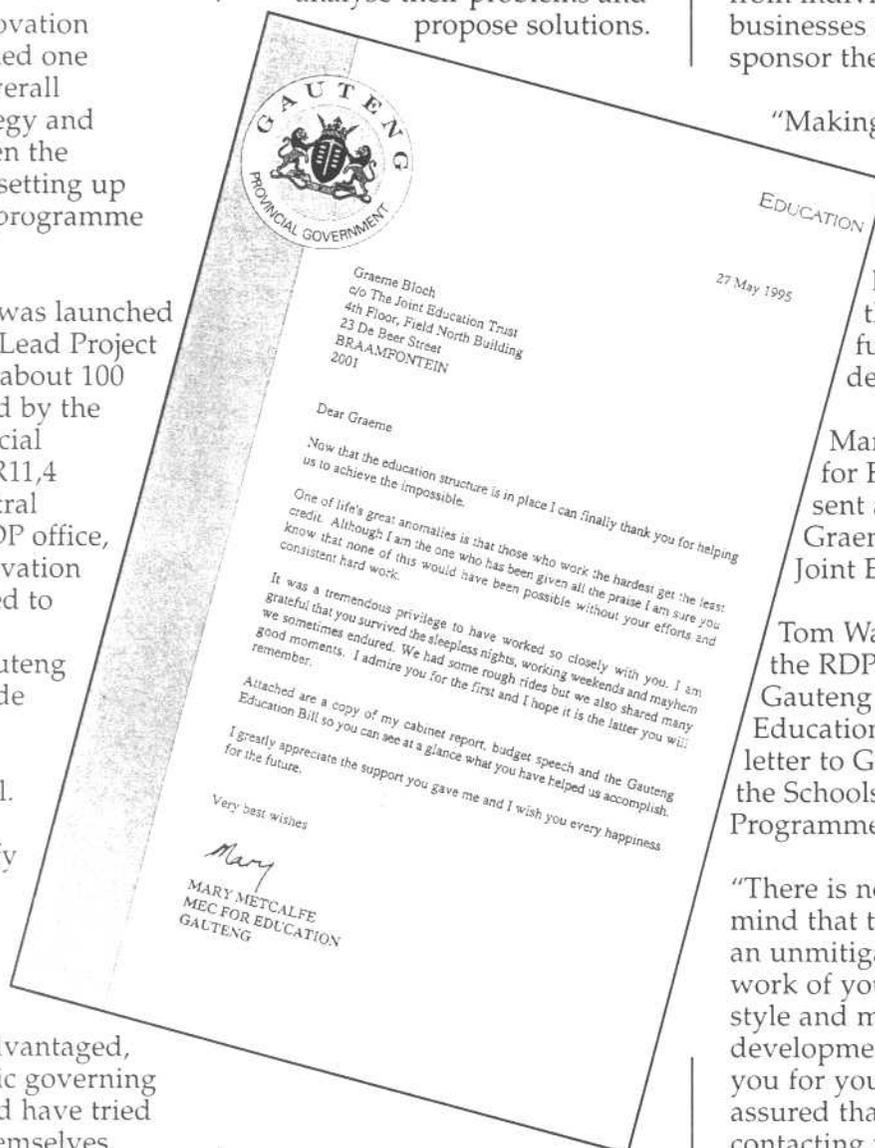
"Everybody has got involved," says Bloch. "The programme is mobilising all kinds of organisations around the improvement of schools. We are also getting offers daily from individuals and businesses who want to sponsor the programme.

"Making schools everyone's responsibility, as the project is doing, is going a long way to laying the groundwork for further development."

Mary Metcalfe, MEC for Education Gauteng, sent a letter of thanks to Graeme Bloch at the Joint Education Trust.

Tom Waspe, Director of the RDP Unit of the Gauteng Department of Education, also said in a letter to Graeme regarding the Schools Renovation Programme:

"There is no doubt in my mind that the project has been an unmitigated success. The work of your team has set the style and method for all future development work. Thank you for your efforts and rest assured that I will be contacting you for advice on a regular basis."



By the end of June some 954 schools had requested assistance. Further applications are still being received for assessment. Bloch sees this as a reflection of the programme's success.

# The COSAS Code of Conduct

The COSAS Code of Conduct for Schools was launched on 4 March 1995 in the Great Hall at Wits. Some 800 people from all walks of life attended and pledged their support to the Code.

It was reported recently in *The Citizen* that Minister Sibusiso Bengu commended the COSAS Code of Conduct as a "brave and constructive initiative" which he endorsed.

The initiative from the Congress of South African Students led to democratic discussion involving students, teachers, parents, government, the NECC and business over some 21 months.

The process of debate surrounding the document, its publication and distribution would not have been possible without the financial support provided by Murray & Roberts, Sappi, the DG Murray Trust and the Joint Education Trust. In the introduction to its Code, COSAS acknowledges this support saying: "Thank you very much for your gift to education."

"COSAS salutes you."

At the launch of the COSAS Code of Conduct for Schools, Jeremy Ractliffe, director of Murray & Roberts, referred to the "golden quadrangle" - an extension of the phrase "the golden triangle" coined by Derek Keys, then Finance Minister. Ractliffe identifies government, communities, business and labour as the four cornerstones of the golden quadrangle which he sees as a unique development model evolving in South Africa.

"In diverse development and reconstruction projects," says



*"The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths to it are made not found, and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destinations."*

*Philip Adams*

Ractliffe, "these four sectors are coming together more and more frequently to form focused alliances with common goals.

"It is the inclusiveness of this model that enables developmental progress towards a peaceful and prosperous society for all in this land of ours."

Ractliffe referred to JET, with its involvement of wide ranging constituencies, as a perfect example of this kind of inclusive alliance.

Similarly, the COSAS Code of Conduct evolved out of debate in which all these interests were represented.

The Code is based on the view that "the struggle for education and economic growth needs to be waged in a principled and disciplined manner." It calls on both pupils and teachers to pledge their support for the values and standards laid down in

the Code - thereby aligning themselves with the primary goal: "to create a non-racial, democratic and dynamic education - an education that will enable us to become responsible parents and members of society."

The document also seeks to create a relationship of mutual respect between teachers, students and parents, thus emphasising the need for democratic governing bodies.

The rules of the Code are set out succinctly in five sections:

- \* The security of schools and property - rejecting all forms of violence and vandalism
- \* Learning and teaching - calling on all students and teachers to commit themselves to their school work
- \* Respect and conduct
- \* Punctuality
- \* Maintaining discipline."

Dennis Beckett, writing in *The Star*, sees the Code as providing an ethical framework. "It is a major endeavour to get millions of students, many of them quite drastically uncertain about direction, attuned to an understanding of what makes up good behaviour.

"Here is a benchmark," writes Beckett, "the beginning of order, an order in which the students' own leadership is integrally and boldly involved. That's progress, and the COSAS leaders who brought it into being deserve support as they battle to establish it as a living norm."

It can be accepted that this process will be long and difficult but the negotiation of the Code and the signing of it was a historical deed. 

# GOVERNMENT & BUSINESS

## Co-operation in education and training

JET and the National Business Initiative co-hosted a meeting, on 7 April, between the Minister of Education, Professor Sibusiso Bengu, and business leaders with a view to extending cooperation between his Ministry and the private sector in human resource development. Key points of the Minister's address are highlighted below.

The Minister began by outlining the government's principal commitments:

- \* first, to providing 10 years of free and compulsory schooling,
- \* second, to aligning the higher education sector more closely to the development needs of the country, and
- \* third, to fiscal discipline.

These priorities would commit government resources to such an extent that it would be imperative that the private sector, development agencies and NGOs be drawn into partnerships with government to develop the following sectors:

- \* School rehabilitation
- \* Tertiary student funding
- \* Vocational & further education
- \* Adult basic education and training
- \* In-service teacher development and support and
- \* Early childhood educare.

The Minister suggested that partnerships between government and the private sector should be allowed to grow naturally, rather than being constrained by rigid agreements. This would enable the respective parties to



*Professor Sibusiso Bengu,  
Minister of Education*

pursue their own interests and exercise their strengths while minimising duplication and maximising complementary efforts.

He suggested that such cooperation could be structured around: common certification and accreditation arrangements in the different sectors; collective action where all relevant groups are involved in consultation and delivery; and sharing information - a particularly important point to avoid duplication, and to assist in understanding what works and what doesn't.

Having emphasised a commitment to participative government, Bengu acknowledged government's responsibility to create conditions conducive to partnerships. He outlined three government initiatives that would contribute to this.

The National Qualifications Framework is being developed to connect all certification and accreditation arrangements in the education and training system. Bengu encouraged donors to link their grants to accreditation within the NQF to ensure that qualifications issued by grantees are relevant to development needs, and are recognised by both the education system and employers.

Statutory councils incorporating representatives of all relevant players in the respective sectors of the education and training system are to be established and will play an advisory role in policy formulation.

On the controversial issue of tax incentives Bengu commented that the Ministry of Education is not free to act independently of the Ministry of Finance. Referring to the Finance Minister's budget speech he noted that a more favourable tax climate would be created around RDP priorities. What that means for education and training, particularly in important areas not adequately provided for in the budget, is currently being investigated.

Minister Bengu said in conclusion: "It is in the interests of all sectors of South African society to contribute to developing the knowledge and skills of all citizens. I look forward to establishing a productive relationship with the private sector in pursuing this goal." 🌿

### Sowetan - 3 April '95

Director general of Education, Dr Chabani Manganyi has called on the private sector and non-governmental organisations to form strong partnerships with government to develop education.

Speaking at the JET report back meeting 31 March, Manganyi referred to JET as a model for such partnerships.

*"In establishing the Trust, business recognised that its development initiatives would be far more effective if they were jointly determined in cooperation with a range of interests representative of South African society. The manifest success of this experiment is an important lesson and one which we in government would like to encourage as a model in our efforts to establish partnerships for the development of education and training."*

### Sowetan - 4 April '95

April 1 marked the legal end of 19 racially based departments of education and ushered in a single national department of education with nine provincial departments.

### Sowetan - 12 April '95

The National Education Coordinating Committee announced yesterday it was closing shop after 10 years as part of the liberation movement. NECC president Mr Siphon Cele said the decision was prompted by the achievement of one of the NECC's major goals - the creation of a single non-discriminatory education department.

### Daily Dispatch - 21 April '95

The regional Ministry of Education (Eastern Cape) has acknowledged that there is still a shortage of classrooms and teaching material in many schools and tertiary institutions, as well as a shortage of teachers in the region and many underqualified teachers.

Eastern Cape MEC for Education, Ms Nosimo Balindlela, said the education

# NEWS WATCH

conditions on farms were the "most depressing". A coordinating committee had been formed to deal with the learning programme on farms.

### Sowetan - 10 May '95

Unemployed qualified teachers with six months' special training may be appointed to fill vacant science and maths teaching posts in the province in terms of a Gauteng education ministry proposal.

The proposed teacher retraining programme would see the introduction of specially constructed, modular courses to which specially selected, qualified but unemployed teachers would be admitted.

*At the Board of Trustees meeting on 22 June, JET committed R360 000 to this project. JET director Nick Taylor said: "This is an exciting partnership which brings together the Sebokeng College of Education, Johannesburg College of Education and the Gauteng Ministry. It offers the promise of addressing two pressing needs in the province: providing jobs for unemployed teachers, and improving the quality of maths and science teaching at the junior high school level."*

### Sowetan - 30 May '95

The Department of Labour is to develop a skills audit to ensure that entrepreneurial training for those disadvantaged by apartheid is linked to the skills needed to transform the economy.

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Director-general, Mr Siphon Pityana, said the government would make money available to training institutions to educate entrepreneurs in the technical skills necessary for managing economic growth.

### Business Day - 31 May '95

The success of Asian countries was based on cooperation between government, education and industry, Asian-Pacific Human Resource Development Centre president Les Pickett said yesterday.

In terms of vocational education and training and a national qualifications framework being developed in SA, he said national standards were important guidelines for people across all industries. The process should be industry-based and guided by the needs of industry.

Ultimately SA needed a "skilled flexible workforce that can adapt to changing needs, supported by a sound, practical vocational education and training system that is not hidebound in bureaucracy and is workforce- and industry-driven in collaboration with government, educators and training providers, meeting the needs of people already in the workforce or preparing to enter the workforce."

### Sowetan - 9 June '95

A Bill giving strong support for an integrated approach to education and training has been published in the Government Gazette. The Bill proposes a National Qualifications Framework and a South African Qualifications Authority as instruments in achieving the approach.

It was proposed by Minister Sibusiso Bengu and Labour Minister Tito Mboweni. The White Paper was based on intensive research and development work spanning several years, in which organised business and labour were leading partners, along with the two departments.