

**JET CONFERENCE**

# **YOUTH JOB-SKILLS TRAINING**

Strengthening provision and developing  
policy

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# INTRODUCTION

*by Nick Taylor, JET*

Welcome to this joint Education Trust conference on Youth Job-Skills Development. Your enthusiasm today has exceeded the most optimistic hopes we had for this meeting.

We expected something like 150 people to attend, and I'm told by the registration desk that we have well over 200. I know also that many of you have been seated since 8 o'clock this morning. We are very gratified by this response and I am certain that today's deliberations will further enrich and extend the work that all of us are doing with South Africa's youth.

Before getting down to the substantive issues of the conference, I feel that I should outline briefly where JET is coming from and why we are committing significant resources to youth development. JET is a partnership of 18 of the country's largest private sector companies and 10 community based organisations, including the political parties, trade unions and educational and business organisations representing those discriminated against by apartheid. Given this composition, it is not surprising that the goals of JET are the same as those of the RDP: economic growth, the redistribution of resources and opportunity, and building democracy. And what better target group than the youth - the hope for the future - amongst whom to nurture the human resources needed to meet these goals.

The purpose of our conference is to share some of the lessons we have learnt in JET's youth portfolio. And through a discussion of these issues we hope to strengthen existing services to young people. For me, three issues stand out as pertinent to this discussion. First, there is a great deal of unwarranted despondency in the youth field. There seems to be a feeling that young people are being neglected in this post election period. Today's presentations should dispel this perception conclusively. You will hear about a wide range of initiatives which are providing young people with a variety of work-related skills. Over the last three years JET alone has spent in excess of R30 million on these projects. The second issue concerns the uncertainty which many NGOs feel about their future. In this regard, it may help to know that JET has committed a further R35 million to NGOs working in the youth sector over the next three years. We are convinced that NGOs have a valuable role to play, and one of the purposes of our conference is to publicise this work and to subject it to critical discussion so as to further strengthen its impact.

And finally, there is the question about the relationship between government and the civil society sector. JET was born in the bad old days of apartheid, when most NGOs were in vigorous opposition to the state. But now that we have a legitimate government, the most important question is: how do NGOs and the state work together so as to complement each other? In my view, the most important first step in answering this question is for NGOs to demonstrate the quantity and quality of the work they have been doing. And second, is the need for NGOs and government to start talking to each other. For this reason we are very pleased that Minister Mbonweni has agreed to address us today, and that a number of other representatives from government are attending.

Before we commence our proceedings, I will ask you to stand and observe a minute's silence in respect of a great South African youth leader. Today is the anniversary of Steve Biko's death, and I feel certain that he would have approved of this conference.

# KEYNOTE ADDRESS

*By Minister Tito Mboweni, Minister of Labour  
(Delivered by Director General of Labour, Mr Sipho Pityana)*

Chairperson  
Ladies and Gentlemen

To begin with, I would like to thank you for inviting me to address this important conference. I am convinced that this conference is tackling one of the most important challenges facing our country today and we are certainly committed to working with all those who are searching for relevant solutions.

The starting point of our deliberations must however be to acknowledge the difficulties we face and to apportion blame not to the victims of joblessness - their lack of confidence or skills - but to the economy whose as yet unresolved structural difficulties are acting as constraints to providing the required set of opportunities for the youth to unleash their creativity and full potential. We are referring here to the unacceptably low absorptive capacity of the economy in creating jobs for those who are economically active amongst the youth. The fact of the matter is that no amount of career guidance will generate sustainable employment and similarly, increasing education and training without taking full cognisance of subsequent income generating opportunities could result in no more than 'qualification inflation which our country can ill afford.

Employment trends over the last twenty years reveal a steady decline in the labour absorption capacity of the economy. Growth in employment reached a high of approximately 4% in the early 1970s, but has been falling ever since. From 1990 to 1993 employment growth rates were negative - according to figures generated by the Comprehensive Labour Market

Commission which we established to investigate these questions and generate policy recommendations. This has been accompanied by an increase in the population growth rate - which has resulted in increasing numbers of people making their way through the schooling system (ie, becoming economically active). Although researchers like Prof Charles Simpkins (of Wits University) predict that the rate of increase of the population is slowing down, this is little comfort to the youth who are pouring onto the labour market at a time when there are simply too few formal sector jobs which our economy can provide. The National Youth Service Initiative research suggests that only 5% of school-leavers were absorbed into formal sector jobs over the last decade.

The depth of this problem can simply not be overstated. About 5 million people are unemployed, of whom at least half are under 24 years of age and 85% are under 34. This can be described as a national crisis - not simply a matter of concern to youth.

And to make matters worse, youth unemployment is in a context of high ADULT unemployment. Even the Central Statistical Services Bureau puts the overall unemployment rate at 33% for 1995 - with the figure standing at 42% for Africans (a figure made up of 34% African male and 50% African female).

The interventions of the past decade, including those made by the previous Department of Manpower under apartheid in terms of the Guidance and Placement Act and the Manpower Training Act, are inadequate when measured against the size of the challenge. Let us indicate why we say so: 127 000 people, 81 % of whom were younger than 35 years of age, were trained under the Scheme for the Training of Unemployed Persons for the year ending March 1995 - and of those, some 20% subsequently found work. On their own these figures may be commendable, but when measured against 2,5 million in need, it is difficult for anybody to make any claims.

In the June edition of the JET Bulletin, Mr Graeme Bloch notes that "it seems probable

that it is only the state that can provide the co-ordination and extensive structures to ensure delivery on a scale that is appropriate to the magnitude of the problem." We would agree - but this begs the question of what co-ordination and what structures? And co-ordination must surely imply co-ordination with social partners in civil society. Deputy President Thabo Mbeki is establishing a National Youth Commission which will hopefully help to realise this.

But what is clear is that as a society we need to 'change gear' - government and non-government players together - to address this problem. Certainly for our part, we are committed to making whatever contribution is possible. We would urge other social partners to make the same commitment and the private sector is by far the one partner without whose support this 'change of gear' would not succeed.

More than anything else this society needs to generate sustainable employment growth. This is not identical to saying that we need economic growth. Internationally there is a trend towards 'jobless growth', particularly in manufacturing. Some argue that economic growth generates employment indirectly by the 'trickle down' method - whereby profits result in investment, and investment leads to jobs. But the unemployed are rather sceptical of this argument, as it tends to translate into an injunction for them to 'wait for better days'.

Sustainable employment growth requires investment and economic growth and development, true. But on its own it is not enough. Even the World Bank today recognises that labour market policies which promote employment growth need to be integrated into the broader growth and development strategies. We have asked the Comprehensive Labour Market Commission to advise us on what such labour market policies should be. And we would like to take advantage of this platform to again invite the audience at this conference to make submissions to the Commission in respect of proposals that may emerge out of discussions today or more broadly from the organisations which you represent. Employment growth is linked, under the RDP to the five programmes - namely:

- Meeting basic needs
- Developing our human resources
- Building the economy
- Democratising the State and Society
- Implementing the RDP

These somewhat bland statements are being translated into real programmes which in most instances require real deadlines and budgets. Building the economy includes building the infrastructure for growth and development - and overlaps with meeting of basic needs - such as the provision of electricity, telecommunications and transportation. It also includes the construction of railways, harbours and inter-provincial highways which in some instances could also link South Africa and its provinces with other southern African countries. Other projects - such as the construction of roads and dams by labour intensive methods - are well known.

One area where special attention has been paid, is youth and small business development. My colleague, Minister Trevor Manuel, has initiated special programmes targeted at the youth, and we eagerly await an evaluation of these schemes.

Recent work reported in the World Bank Development Report of 1995 (*Workers in an Integrating World*) suggests that most successful entrepreneurs are people in their middle and later years, and that young people tend to prefer work experience before being able to make a success of a small business. We would be interested to know whether this finding is reinforced here, or whether our South African experience proves to be different.

But if this finding is confirmed, then the comment by Mr Graeme Bloch in his article referred to becomes extremely important. He speaks of a need for a "system of mentorship by local business and internships offered by large companies to provide work experience". This is suggestive of a new type of 'traineeship' or learning contract which could be considered for legislation. Again we invite you to consider this and make

recommendations to the Comprehensive Labour Commission at your earliest convenience.

There are many international models, and we would be interested to know which of these is suggestive for labour market policy in South Africa. But as we consider these, we need to consider the impact on the current workforce - who naturally fear that the gains they have won through trade union bargaining with employers will be undercut by cheap young labour - and find ways of allaying their fears while not preventing young people from gaining the work experience they so badly need.

We have been concerned for some time about the characterisation of unemployed youth as 'out of school/out of work' or worse still 'the lost generation'. Should the schooling system - or at least the college system - not become partners in addressing this problem? And if they were to become partners, what role could we ask them to play IN PARTNERSHIP with employment creation programmes or schemes?

Certainly the National Qualifications Framework which myself and Minister Bengu are currently shepherding through Parliament will have a fundamental role to play in respect of integrating theory and practice for the youth who are no longer full-time learners - but who wish to continue learning to improve the possibility of gaining higher income and quality of life for themselves and their families in the medium to long term. As a society we will need to experiment with flexible combinations of learning and working to achieve optimal results with our limited resources. New forms of learning will have to be developed to meet these challenges. We are currently waiting for the recommendations of a research project commissioned by the National Training Board. We trust that the youth representative on the National Training Board will advise you of developments as they unfold.

The question we need to consider is how best to ensure that young people are afforded the employment opportunities that these projects bring? Indeed, do we need to intervene or will the youth automatically get the job because the unemployed are the young? The balance we need to establish is between ensuring that the youth are involved in employment creation schemes in general, and developing programmes especially for them. Given the size of the problem, it is probably not a question of either/or, but rather of both/and.

We have chosen rather to focus on the problems and to join you in thinking about possible solutions. We have indicated that there are a number of labour market issues that have to be addressed, and have suggested that initiatives might be possible.

However, we are the first to appreciate that there is no one solution to a problem as massive as this one. Organisations such as JET form part and parcel of our society's attempts to tackle problems and difficulties head on. We hope that the advent of democracy will not mean that such organisations will wither away. Indeed, the role of the private sector in maintaining such organisations cannot be underestimated. We wish to conclude by wishing you well with your deliberations - and to assure you of our determination to work with you in finding solutions to the reconstruction and development challenges we are facing.

We will be paying close attention to the recommendations emanating from this conference.

Thank you very much.

## **PANEL SPEAKERS**

A panel of representatives from five successful JET funded projects presented their experience of what has worked. Debbie van Rensburg from Bergzicht Training Centre, Mandla Vilakazi from School Leavers Opportunity Training (SLOT), Ronnie Moalusi from Keyboards Secretarial College, Ahmed Moonda from Bertrams Brigades and Rory Robertshaw from Centre for Opportunity Development (COD).

Each speaker covered factors such as local market research, selection criteria, development, curriculum and accreditation, and post-training support.

# SCHOOL LEAVERS' OPPORTUNITY TRAINING

*Presented by: Mandla Vilakazi*

Mr Chairman,

I greet you all, ladies and gentlemen.

I am from SLOT, which stands for School Leavers' Opportunity Training. We are based in the Natal Midlands, right in the centre of KwaZulu-Natal, but we network with some 47 communities in 7 different regions. I am speaking here today as the ex-student of SLOT and now the employee of SLOT. I am the field officer working in the Valley of a Thousand Hills.

SLOT was conceived in response to a need expressed by the community. Because there is a lot of unemployment, they wanted job creation in KwaZulu-Natal and they wanted skills training for their youth.

## Programme outline

SLOT's programmes are divided into four phases which aim to enhance students motivation and skills with an emphasis on giving practical training in those areas which have a realistic chance of enabling self-employment. At all phases there is training in communication and business skills.

SLOT 1, the first phase, is a two week residential course - preparation for future training. It includes career guidance, empowerment and self-motivation, English communication, life skills and basic business skills.

SLOT 2, also residential and averaging 10 weeks duration, emphasises self-employment and offers courses in different spheres like electrical wiring and maintenance for houses, plumbing, welding, mechanical/ motor maintenance, building, bricklaying, carpentry, computers and clerical skills, skills for the hotel industry, agriculture, sewing and so forth.

We use existing underutilised training institutions to do the training on our behalf. The courses comply with our criteria and include a business module.

SLOT 3 is a 5-day residential programme concentrating on business skills. We use the Township MBA business skills material to run our programmes. This course is offered only to those students who show particular motivation to start their own business. Students who complete this course qualify to borrow from the Start Up Fund, a progressive loan scheme which is offered by KFC and by the Trident Institute as part of the support service.

SLOT 4 is the post-training support phase which involves the field officers, co-ordinators and the marketing adviser in field visits and communication with students - giving them assistance in their own businesses or seeking markets for their products and services. Our marketing adviser is investigating possible links with entrepreneurs and bigger businesses. Some of the projects already in place include the following.

1. Eskom - where Eskom is contracting some of our students to do jobs like cleaning and assembling electrical components.
2. Umgeni Water Board - in this project students are subcontracted by Umgeni Water Board to do stand pipes and water meters.
3. Sundial Manufacturing - where our students make sun dials and there is a market being established for them.
4. Spaza Shops - where BP South Africa is donating containers to serve as paraffin and gas depots and those containers will serve also as the spaza shops. The students who qualify to do this spaza shop business must have completed the Township MBA course.

## Market Research

In researching the market, we use the bottom up approach, because if we simply impose our programmes on the community, they will not



## SLOT STUDENTS EMPLOYED

	EMPLOYED	COMPLETED SLOT 1/1	
1990/1	72	173	=41.6%
1992	84	251	=33.4%
1993	119	350	=34%
1994	86	413	=20.28%
(1994 December 24/413 = 5.8%)			

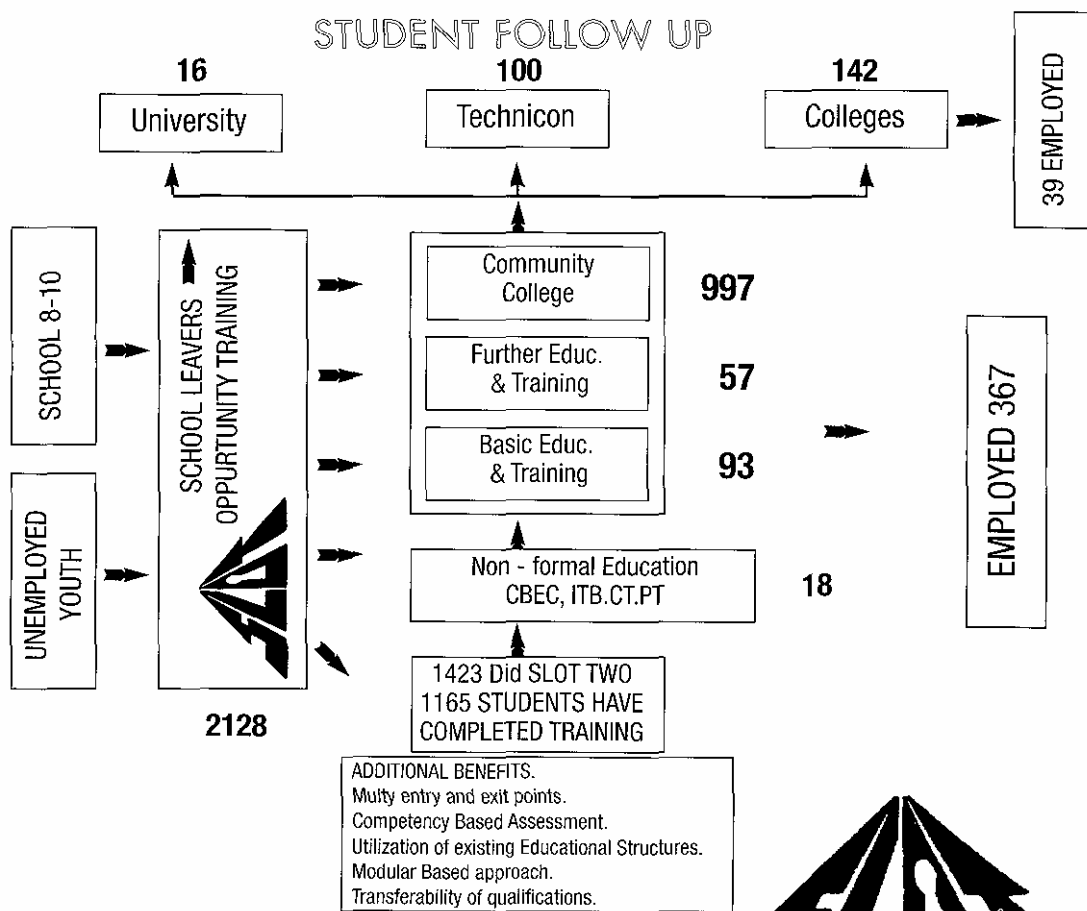
## FURTHER TRAINING

257 Students entered University, Teachers or Technical College

Only traced students are recorded  
as Employed. Untraced students are  
recorded as un-employed.

Updated - 20.04.95

## STUDENT FOLLOW UP



work. The project must be started by the community.

We start by empowering the community itself. Using the Institute of Natural Resources PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) programme we work with traditional leaders and community leaders to find out what the needs of that particular community are.

#### Selection Criteria

Our application form for courses is a screening process in itself. We take in students aged from 17 to 29, with a minimum of Standard 8 schooling. We also run aptitude tests so that we get the right student to do the right training - and ultimately we get the right product - a student who suits the job for which he/she has been trained.

#### Development

We keep records of all our students. As the chart shows, since 1990 we have trained 2 128 students and they have gone on to different courses at Community Colleges, or in Further Education and Training, or Basic Education and Training, or some to non-formal education.

367 of our students are employed. Some have gone on to universities, technikons and colleges as part of their further training.

The students recorded as employed are those we are able to trace. Those not traced are listed as unemployed. At the top of the chart you can see the numbers of employed versus the numbers trained and the percentages.

#### Curriculum & Accreditation

SLOT's courses are not nationally accredited at this stage, but we are working on that. The exception is the electrical course which is accredited by Eskom, it is the course offered by Eskom itself.

#### Post-training Support

I am one of those involved in the follow-up of students - to see where they are and what they are doing. It is useless just to train and dump. It is important to give the students support when they realise, as we have in our turn, that being at school is different from the real world. It is important to create this sense of understanding in the students, to make them realistic.

I myself wanted to be a lawyer, but I am not a lawyer today. I went to university but I dropped out because my parents could not afford the fees. I really benefited from the SLOT programme and I would like to say that our whole SLOT programme could not have made it without the generous support from the joint Education Trust.

I ask other NGOs and institutions involved in job creation and skills training programmes to carry on. We cannot wait for the government - we have got to do things on our own now to make the RDP a success.

Ladies and gentlemen of South Africa, I thank you all.

# **BERTRAMS DEVELOPMENT BRIGADE**

*Presented by: Ahmed Moonda*

The Bertrams Development Brigade (BDB) is located within the Education with Production (EWP) mode of education provision. Education With Production (EWP)

Education with Production has been described as:

"Taking advantage of the pedagogical potential of the production process to teach students not only how to produce but also to teach subjects of general knowledge (natural and social sciences, mathematics and language). In addition combining education with production leads to increasing the volume of goods and services available, and raising funds to finance school activities and for the family budget."

*(Antonio Cabral de Andrade, ILO, 1988)*

Seven syllabuses were developed as the nucleus of the optimum curriculum for EwF. This applies to educational institutions and programmes which engage their students in economically purposeful productive work (and socially useful activities) alongside academic and theoretical study. It also applies to adult and distance educational institutions and programmes for full-time workers.

The combination of EwP is potentially the most effective means of linking theory with practice to reinforce learning. Backed up by this curriculum, it is a key to the all-round education, training and personal development of every individual - of the many different capabilities and talents of each - intended to prepare all for socially useful, personally satisfying, mentally and culturally enriching, healthy and economically productive lives. EwP makes possible considerable social, economical and pedagogical benefits. Potential pedagogical benefits can be divided into the cognitive, the affective and the psychomotor domains of learning.

Most production processes involve the application of mathematics and science in the use of resources, of skills and of technologies. Social, legal, cultural, economic and political factors have a bearing on production, facilitating or impeding it. Development impacts on the environment and raises questions of its sustainability and the quality of life. It will be readily seen from the diverse content of the EwP curriculum that it maximises the learning potential of the linkage of theory and practice, because so much of the theory in this curriculum finds its reflection in the realities of production.

But to fulfill this potential requires that educational institutions at secondary (and tertiary) levels become centres of development (as well as learning) based on diversified production that is both technically and economically well managed.

Surely, the development and inculcation of such qualities as commitment, responsibility and perseverance, integrity and empathy, diligence and sociability, not to mention creativity, problem solving and leadership, require a mixture of theory and practice, in the real life conditions that production offers. The most obvious economic benefits, as experience in many countries has shown, is the income generated - often quite substantial - by the sale of goods and services produced by student labour. But students can also develop infrastructures, construct buildings, and manufacture plant or equipment for their institutions or for the use of communities. Productive activities provide opportunities for students to gain practical experience in the management of enterprises (as well as for practice on-the-job of technical skills) and also to develop appropriate perceptions, creativity and confidence. There are examples of enterprises in several countries set up and managed by students who had benefited from such experience.

EwP helps reverse, at least while young people are learning and developing themselves, the socially divisive separation of mental and manual labour. Historically, this social separation, and the role selection that serves it, has imposed on schooling a pedagogy, including curriculum and activities, and a form of organisation, designed primarily to develop intellectual qualities, competitiveness, individualism and authority. The pedagogy is backed up by periodic examinations which in selecting a few reject a great many learners at different stages of the educational process.

#### Aims of the Bertrams Development Brigades

- ✍ To provide education and training to out of school and unemployed youths - aged from 16;
- ✍ To empower the youth to find gainful employment by providing education and training with production;
- ✍ To engage youth in socially useful production: the renovation of existing homes and the construction of new homes, the urban renewal of Bertrams (eastern sector of Johannesburg) in support of racially reintegrating the city by providing affordable housing to low income families.

#### Education, Training and Production

Education provision is through the development of appropriate syllabi in Communication in English, Mathematics, Science and Development Studies, which relate the subject matter to work and real life experiences.

Training is provided with a hands-on approach. Trainees usually spend between 70% and 80% of their time on production and are released for the remaining 20% to 30% for academic study and the theory of their production trade, as well as for practical training. On the job trainees work under the supervision of instructors (at a ratio not exceeding 1:12) having first acquired a modular skill in practicals alongside more experienced trainees. Production activities generate an income (the refurbishment of derelict homes and construction of new homes) and provide a vehicle for employment and training. Curriculum and Certification

Trainees will have access to the Training Performance Criteria (TPC), Site Experience (SE) and Production Performance Criteria (PPC). These criteria precede the taking of the Trade Tests of the Building Industries Training Board (BITB) with whom FEP has had discussions for accreditation as a training institute. Trainees who wish to re-enter formal education and who have shown an aptitude for academic study (in the subjects mentioned above) could choose to take examinations in formal subjects at 'O' or Matric level. Provided that candidates have attained 23 years of age and passes in four subjects, they would qualify for matriculation exemption. The BDB will provide skills training with production in the following skills: bricklaying, carpentry, fitting and joining, painting and decorating, plastering and tiling, plumbing, electrical fitting, bookkeeping and costing, stores control and participatory management. Trainees would be contracted for one year at a time but should funding allow, three year training programmes would be set to allow trainees to become multi-skilled.

The full three-year membership allows the trainees to participate in an integrated and diversified skills development programme which includes socially useful activities.

#### Assessment

One hundred and twenty youths receive education and training

- ✍ 82% have gone on to formal employment 15% have received Higher Diplomas from the Johannesburg Technical College
- ✍ All trainees have literacy and numeracy certificates up to ABE Level 4
- ✍ Six houses have been built
- ✍ A park and suburban upgrading have taken place

The next phase will include the construction of 20 homes with new trainees.

# KEYBOARDS

## A Project of Interchurch Education Programme

*Presented by: K.R. Moalusi*

I take this opportunity to thank JET, the organizers of this conference, the chairperson and everyone here present. Keyboards, is a project of Interchurch Education Programme, funded partly by Joint Education Trust. Why Keyboards?

Keyboards Secretarial & Development Project was founded in 1982 to fill an urgent need for a thorough secretarial training for young black women. It is currently based in Braamfontein. Keyboards is committed to providing a relevant, up-to-date and quality education and training, providing skills that will enable young women to play a meaningful role in the world of work and business.

### Selection Criteria

Applications must be made for admission and all prospective students take an entrance test. This consists of a written test and a personal interview. Students come mostly from economically disadvantaged communities and would not normally expect tertiary education.

We draw our students mostly from various townships around Johannesburg.

Keyboards looks for young women who show potential to develop into efficient and economically productive members of society, with the ability to take initiative and develop a thinking attitude and social conscience. Potential students must have a Matric certificate or have completed the Standard 10 year. Approximately 95% of the students selected in 1993, 1994 and 1995 had Matric. Students sit for verbal and non-verbal aptitude tests designed to test their overall academic potential. (HSRC)

Students write an English exam which tests their listening, reading and writing skills. Each student is interviewed by two members of staff to determine whether the student has the potential and aptitude to succeed in the business world.

How Keyboards has grown and developed The project began in 1992 teaching typing skills on manual typewriters to 10 students. Each year the curriculum has been adapted to suit the changing needs of the business world. Keyboards is now teaching a full and integrated curriculum to 52 students.

The students' time on the computers in 1993 was limited due to the few computers we had, it was also vital that more intensive computer training be provided during 1994 to enable the students to function competitively on the job market. With this in mind, fund-raising for Novell "network" system linking 26 workstations was initiated, most of the money was raised and the system installed at the beginning of 1994.

It also became clear that even after successful completion of our one year course, students found that they were still at a disadvantage. They find themselves at front-line positions which demand high levels of spoken English and the ability to verbally deal with problem situations. They lacked greatly in vital skills of telephone technique. It was very important we raise money to buy a telephone training simulator with a switchboard.

A Bookkeeping course was initiated in 1992 taking students to Level 1 of the Pitman Examination. In 1993 most students reached Level 2. We hope to raise money to buy accounting software packages to help our students have a competitive edge on the market.

In May 1994 part-time Saturday classes began for Wordperfect 5.1. Intermediate Level and Lotus 123. These computer skills courses will run for a total of 20 hours, 5 Saturdays of 4hours sessions.

We also run a unique telephone technique and skills programme which includes a theoretical

and practical component using the exclusive LETA switchboard simulator system. This is run during the week, either a 2-day intensive course, or a 6-week course, one morning per week. It provides the intensive, hands-on experience that produces efficiency and courtesy with the telephone.

Minute Taking and Report Writing courses are run per arrangement.

Increasingly, Keyboards is working in providing support and back-up training and resources for the affirmative action policies which are now being adopted by many corporate concerns. In order to do this it requires financial and moral support to ensure that our students meet the requirements and expectations of the business world. Curriculum: What and How we teach Keyboards offers a one year full-time course in all basic secretarial skills. Business subjects covered include:

- Typing (Elementary, Intermediate & Advanced)
- Computer Skills: DOS, Word Perfect 5.1, Lotus
- Audio Typing
- Bookkeeping (Levels 1 & 2), Turbo Cash, Pastel
- Office Practice
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) (Inter, Higher Inter, Advanced)
- Telephone Techniques

In order to supplement the disadvantaged educational background from which our students come, Keyboards offer extra enriching courses.

Enrichment Courses offered include:

- Cultural Programme: involves visits to places of cultural and business interests, invitations to visiting speakers on women's issues, the culture of the business world and related issues.
- Communications: focuses on assertiveness, time management, proactive training, as well as confidence building.
- Life skills: providing a forum for discussion on topical life issues and facilitation of enabling environment for students to acquire psychological coping mechanisms.

Travel and First Aid Courses were added to the curriculum in 1994 which implements our commitment that every opportunity must be made available to our students in order to bridge the educational gap and for them to be able to compete equally in the business world. The 7-week Travel Course is being run by Rennies Training and will cover areas such as travel terminology, geography, hotels, reading timetable, etc.

The 8-hour Emergency First Aid course was run by the Institute of Emergency First Aid and covered topics such as burns, bleeding, CPR, choking and general first aid. Keyboards has been registered as a Pitman Examination Centre since its inception. Students also write examinations at the end of their course to qualify for a Keyboards' Diploma.

Almost as important as the commercial skills are the cultural programmes and the English lessons incorporated in the course. In addition, visits to various places of interest e.g. the Stock Exchange, the Art Gallery, etc are arranged throughout the year. Our aim is to turn out efficient, confident, thinking young women in touch with the needs of their community, their environment and aware of contemporary events.

Keyboards introduced a highly successful work experience programme in 1992, 1993 and 1994. Students spent three weeks (now four weeks) in an organisation as part of their course. This initiative has been developed and expanded and is now an established component of the course. It has the following objectives:

- To assist the students in achieving confidence in meeting people and handling an office environment.
- To give students experience with the latest technology and equipment.
- To give students an idea of what will be required of them as applicants and employees in the job market and work environment.
- To create contacts between Keyboards and organisations, so that Keyboards can function as a source of well trained potential employees.

- To update and refine the training that we offer in response to the invaluable postwork-experience feedback that is received from both students and organisations.
- To publicise Keyboards' name and function with local businesses, thus creating possible business or funding contacts.

Students write the internationally recognised Pitman Examinations in all the business course subjects. Students reach different levels and will write exams according to the level of expertise they have attained. For example, over 50% of the students will write the Pitman Typing examination at the advanced level. This means that the students must reach a typing speed of at least 50 wpm.

Post Training Support Keyboards helps students to find employment, placing approximately 85% of graduating students. Over 90% of the 1989 class and at least 80% of the 1990 class found positions once they had graduated from Keyboards. 95% of the students from 1991, 1992 and 1993 classes were employed. Currently 50 of 52 of 1994 students are placed in jobs.

Keyboards works closely with the recruitment departments in various organisations. This has the dual aim of assisting students in finding employment, and assisting employers with the recruitment of staff at a junior entry level.

33% of employed students are in the private sector, 15% are in the civil service and 52% are in the non-profit organisation sector.

Once students graduate at the end of the year, they are encouraged to return in January to maintain their typing and computer skills. The students run a Graduates Club where they invite visiting speakers and run workshops designed to upgrade their skills. The Reconstruction and Development of our people and our country will greatly depend on skills training and development. if we produce nothing, we will have nothing to share.

# THE CENTRE FOR OPPORTUNITY DEVELOPMENT (JASA)

*Presented by: Rory Robertshaw*

## Introduction

The Centre for Opportunity Development (COD) is an NGO involved in the field of small business development, running business and entrepreneurship training programmes for unemployed youth. It is a national project with three provincial branches in Gauteng, Northern Province and the Western Cape. The Centre, now in its third year, was started by its parent body Junior Achievement Southern Africa (JASA) and owes much of its subsequent development to the pioneering work of Burt Neethling.

## Market Research

The situation facing youth in the country has been clearly documented and is well known (ref. CASE research). The problems experienced by unemployed youth are particularly severe within an economy with shrinking formal sector opportunities. The need to institute programmes to address the needs of youth are paramount particularly in the sphere of job creation and skills training. Junior Achievement felt they were ideally placed to institute such a programme having gained capacity and insight from over a decade of practically based business and entrepreneurship training for children in the later years of their schooling. The technology they had developed could be applied in programmes for unemployed youth, though needing adaptation to the specific needs, skills and resource base of this different and complex target group.

When initiating the project the process of adaptation started with broad consultation of the various role players. Initial workshops with youth were run to develop a framework of needs in relation to business and entrepreneurship training. This framework was subsequently fleshed out with the assistance of experts in the fields: academics, entrepreneurs, community practitioners.

## Selection

The target group for the Centre is unemployed youth between the ages of 18 to 30 who do not hold tertiary qualifications. They are recruited by Course Organisers (field workers) networking with community organisations, NGOs, community resource centres, church groups, women's groups, youth groups, sports clubs etc. The typical profile of past students are youth in their early to mid-twenties, slightly more female than male students, usually with dependants and matching closely demographics and unemployment trends of our areas of operation.

Given the nature, objectives, content and methodology of the programme, not all categories of youth are catered for. Our primary concern is to select students who are most likely to benefit and be successful as a result of the project's intervention. Primary successes are those students who will go on to start their own businesses.

The initial selection process used three procedures. Applicants were assessed through standardised personality profile testing to gauge business inclination. Numeracy and English literacy testing were carried out assessing functionality in relation to the demands of the programme. Thirdly, various push factors thought to influence the desire to start a business were considered, for example, the number of dependants and the length of unemployment.

COD commissioned a major external research study (HSRC), in the form of longitudinal impact analysis including consideration of the determinants of success. From this study we were made aware of some inherent weaknesses in the selection process. Some assumptions on which the tests were based did not hold. For example, there was an insignificant correlation between success and



the number of dependants. Furthermore, two key components were weakly represented in the selection process: the assessment of career intention and entrepreneurial characteristics. The new selection process focuses closely on these last determinants. Screening out those whose career intention is towards academic or technical training, formal sector employment, and screening in those who express a desire to run their own businesses.

The aspect of assessing entrepreneurial characteristics is more controversial. Academics have battled to define the quintessential characteristics of the entrepreneur. However, there are various groups of motivational and personal characteristics as well as existing skills and resources which contribute to the likelihood of entrepreneurial drive in an applicant.

A structured questionnaire and interview form the core of the new selection process in conjunction with continued literacy and numeracy testing.

### The Opportunity Development Programme

The Opportunity Development Programme is the primary activity of the Centre for Opportunity Development. Accommodating over 30 students per course, running 22 courses per year per branch, totalling around 2000 youth per year.

The aim of the programme is to maximise the capability of youth to gain access to legitimate economic activity and to reduce their feelings of alienation through a specialised business and life skills training programme.

The objectives of the programme are: As a result of attending the Opportunity Development programme, participants will show improved abilities in the following areas:

1. Communication skills
2. Teamwork skills
3. Planning and time management skills
4. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills
5. Negotiation and conflict resolution skills
6. Understanding of the business system
7. Understanding principles of marketing
8. Understanding principles of costing, pricing and profit
9. Understanding production principles
10. Selling skills
11. Record-keeping skills
12. Understanding finance and interest
13. The skills needed to identify, evaluate and benefit from formal and informal sector opportunities

### Programme Description

The programme consists of several phases spread over four months. A new programme is started every two weeks and at peak capacity 9 programmes are conducted simultaneously.

#### The Course Phase

Students attend a three week, full-time course with 75 hours contact time. Academic modules that contain a high level of student participation include life skills, business skills and preparation for post-course phases. The primary feature of the course is a student-run franchise business. The group of students research, set up and run a small manufacturing concern, with the guidance and support of the Centre for Opportunity Development. This is not a simulation; students are paid salaries and sales commission, and the final profit is distributed according to a formula decided by the students. Great care has been taken in designing this phase to ensure that the skills acquired are applicable to the types of businesses our participants are likely to start for themselves. Students also have the opportunity to apply the principles learnt in the life skills and business skills modules.

During the course, students are individually counselled by members of staff to ensure realistic goal-setting. Students also receive a diary which contains a summary of the course content, and a professionally prepared Curriculum Vitae.

Post-course Support Phase 1: Co-op Phase Towards the end of the course, students divide into 6 small co-operatives which function on a part-time basis for four weeks. The primary aim of this phase is to help students to increase the capital they have earned during the course. They are mentored by members of staff, who ensure that this

second experience in running a small business is successful. The choice of business activity belongs to the students.

#### Post-course Support Phase 2: Business Plan Phase

Over three weeks, staff of the Centre for Opportunity Development help individual students to formulate business plans and to access funding through banks and micro-lending agencies.

#### Post-course Support Phase 3: Business Implementation Phase

Mentors help students to implement their own business plans with the capital available to them. During this phase, money earned by students during the programme becomes available to them in the form of a bank account.

#### Certification and Contingency Phase

At the end of the thirteenth week of the programme, students attend a certification ceremony. Students not yet gainfully employed continue with a contingency phase which either provides further assistance, or access to skills-based training by other agencies.

#### Business Advisory Service

After the conclusion of the programme, the Centre for Opportunity Development continues to provide an advisory service on request. Support does not continue indefinitely, it is usually 3 to 6 months after the programme. Ideally support should last till such time as the student develops beyond the resource base and the area of service provision of the project.

Two distinct patterns underlie the methodology of the programme:

1. A stepped decrease in group size, from 30 during the course phase, to 6 during the cooperative phase, to individual attention during the final stages.
2. A stepped increase in student independence, from close staff supervision during the student franchise business, to gentle mentoring during the co-op phase, to the provision of assistance only on request during the final phases of the programme.

#### The Kick-Start Project

Kick-Start '95 is a nation-wide business education project for unemployed youth. It is an initiative of the South African Breweries (Beer Division) and the National Youth Development Forum, and is conceived, designed and managed by the Centre for Opportunity Development.

- ✍ Business Awareness: to create general awareness of how business works amongst a broad spectrum of the South African population, reaching 500 000 people
- ✍ Business Skills: to impart business skills to 12 000 unemployed youths nationally with the express purpose of encouraging participants to engage themselves as entrepreneurs
- ✍ Business Start-up Incentive: to provide a challenge in the form of R1 000 seed capital to 400 unemployed youths with promising business ideas
- ✍ Entrepreneur Assistance and Support: to provide the 24 participants in the project who achieve the most with their seed capital with start-up capital of between R3 000 and R10 000, as well as practical assistance to make them successful entrepreneurs.

#### Other Programmes

The Centre for Opportunity Development has various other programmes which address different target groups and needs. These include the Business Opportunity Course, rural programmes and other mass education projects, for example, a series of ten articles are currently being published in Up-Beat magazine to reach our target population as well as teachers and students in school. Project Development

COD realises the importance of a continual process of evolution and development of project and programmes through a process of review and evaluation, to increase its impact as well as keeping abreast of contextual developments and changes.

The COD programme over the years has developed to become more directed, tailored to the needs of the target group and geared to deliver success. There are countless examples

of this, some worth mentioning here are the inclusion of business mathematics modules into the programme to counterbalance the very low levels of understanding of youth coming through the DET system.

The inclusion of modules for guest speakers to relate their experiences and stand as role models; this week for example, the students were addressed by Happy Ntsingila, a founding member of Herd Buoys - the premier black advertising agency. The next address will be by a successful Soweto tavern owner.

Finally the process of post-course support has been instituted and developed to guide students towards self-driven implementation of their own business ideas.

The diversification of the COD product range is also part and parcel of this development process. The construction and effective delivery of a variety of tailored programmes to suit different needs is an ongoing process. COD's capacity and effectiveness in applying basic technology to differing conditions and programmatic requirements is testimony to its adaptability. Such programmes include those which have been adapted to suit lower educational levels, the restricted resource base and market infrastructure of rural areas, and those geared to deliver mass education programmes and mass training programmes which still retain high levels of quality input.

Finally, the project has managed to grow horizontally, having initially run one branch in Johannesburg, this branch has grown to service most of the Gauteng province. Furthermore, this was followed by setting up two other provincial branches in the Northern Province and the Western Cape, again with careful adaptation to the local conditions.

It is hoped that the skills and resources developed by the Centre can be applied to other provinces and other specific needs groups (eg women, disabled, young offenders) either by COD or other agencies interested in this service field.

## Conclusion

The Centre for Opportunity Development is ultimately driven by the desire to see its participants empowered with skills, knowledge and experience to the point they can apply them through running their own businesses. This desire is realised through the construction and development of effective tailored programmes and the efforts of dedicated staff.

# BERGZICHT TRAINING CENTRE

*Presented by: Debbie van Rensburg*

The training needs in South Africa are enormous but we believe that investment in human potential will pay off in our country. Whilst education receives a large percentage of the Gross Domestic Product in South Africa, proportionately higher than almost anywhere in the world, 60 % of our population remains functionally illiterate. This must be taken against the background of formal unemployment estimated at an average 30% (some regions showing as high as 70%) and a national economy which is generating only seven jobs per year for every 100 people leaving school.

However, whilst it is widely accepted that education reproduces society, it must also innovate and provide a broad framework to develop human beings to their fullest potential. Whilst Bergzicht cannot address the greater educational need, it can most certainly address adult basic education and skills development needs within its focal area ie. the services market. In so doing, it has the potential to infuse pride and a regular income of at least a subsistence level of survival for many families.

## Bergzicht Training Project

Bergzicht Training Centre was officially opened on 6 March 1992 in Stellenbosch. The centre's conception was a response to the pressing need for training for unskilled and unemployed people. A survey that was done in the Stellenbosch region of the Western Cape showed a definite need for trained workers in the areas of frail care, tourism, daycare mothers and housekeepers on which the centre decided to focus. It was also decided not only to train people, but to take a more holistic approach by assisting to secure employment through an in-house employment bureau.

The Bergzicht Training Project is registered under Sec. 21 of the Companies Act as a nonprofit making company with seven members. Five members are directors and a further two directors may be co-opted. The centre is registered as a training centre in terms of the Law on Training of 1981 and the employment bureau of the centre is registered with the Department of Labour. Bergzicht is also registered with the Department of Finance as a training centre for income tax purposes under article 18(A) of the Income Tax Act. The Tourism course of the centre is accredited by the Hospitality Board, previously known as FEDHASA.

Two buildings on the historic Bergzicht town square in Stellenbosch are currently occupied by the centre. A 10-year lease has been entered into with Stellenbosch Municipality, who owns the property, at very reasonable rentals with no escalation. The centre functions with a permanent staff of eleven and a temporary staff of three. Minimal disbursements are paid due to a lack of funds for administration purposes.

As far as capacity is concerned, two basic courses can be offered simultaneously with current facilities on the premises. With the possibility of satellite training centres, even more students could be accommodated. The broad markets currently served or envisaged by Bergzicht could be schematically described as follows:

## MARKET SEGMENTS

STUDENTS	EMPLOYERS	DONORS	MEMBERS	SELF-EMPLOYED
Individuals	Households	Institutional	Corporate	Individuals
Companies	Restaurants	Corporate	Individuals	
	Hotels	Individual		
	Guest houses			
	Old age homes			
	Crèches			

Bergzicht aims to meet its objectives by means of the following training system, namely through the courses offered and

the recruitment and selection of candidates of these courses.

#### Courses Offered

(12 - 14 Students per course)

All students to complete the Basic Home Management course of twenty days duration (4 weeks) and thereafter to select one of four options, namely:

1. to seek employment as a Home Manager, with the assistance of the employment bureau of Bergzicht, or
2. to continue for a further 24 days in Day Care and thereafter to seek employment as a day care mother, creche assistant or as a housekeeper with this additional qualification, with the assistance of the employment bureau of Bergzicht, or
3. to continue training for a further 25 days in Frail Care and thereafter to seek employment as a frail care assistant within an institution or as a nurse-aid in private homes or in the community, with the assistance of the employment bureau of Bergzicht, or
4. to continue training for a further 20 days (4 weeks) in Tourism, and thereafter to seek employment in the hospitality industry with the assistance of the employment bureau of Bergzicht.

Bergzicht also offers a Literacy course based on the Brand Knew concept as well as a course in Entrepreneurship presented by the Stellenbosch Graduate Business School. A number of new courses are planned for implementation during 1995.

#### Recruitment and Selection

Functional literacy is really the only requirement for acceptance as a trainee. In order to prevent candidates with good potential from failing to meet this requirement, applicants are referred to a literacy training expert working for Bergzicht. Thereafter, subject only to the logistical capacity for trainees, and based on a fair and equitable screening process, candidates are selected for the Basic Home Management course. Applicants should preferably be older than 16, younger than 45 with a Standard 2 education or higher. Having completed this course, and in consultation with the trainer, the student may elect one of the four options described above, subject only, once again, to the logistical capacity for trainees on these courses.

#### Other Services

Having placed trainees in employment, Bergzicht has also identified the need to extend its services by way of consulting to both the employer and employee. This is implemented by means of the following:

1. A contract of employment which protects the rights and interests of both parties
2. A code of conduct for both the employer and the employee (in order to pre-empt as many possible causes of conflict in the employment relationship)
3. A follow-up, documented service to measure both parties' responses to the relationship within and subject to a maximum period of six months
4. An advisory service to both parties with respect to fair and equitable disciplinary procedures
5. Providing a mediation service

#### Aims of Project

##### *Vision*

To become the most successful training project for semi-skilled workers in South Africa and to be seen as a model on which all other similar projects are based.

##### *Mission*

To develop and grow people with life and technical, career-orientated skills in the homecare and related areas, empower them to negotiate for a living wage and attempt to secure employment for them through an in-house employment bureau.

#### Values

- To serve the needs and interests of the community
- Empowerment of people
- Quality in standards of service
- Client focus (employers and employees)
- Focus on development of human potential
- Protection of employer/ employee relationship
- Integrity in all dealings

### *Long Term Goals*

- To become the leading training project for unemployed people in the Western Cape • To be the model for similar ventures throughout the country
- To build the capacity to train 600 workers per year in two years' time
- To find employment for 100% of trained students

### *Objectives for 1995*

- To train 544 students during 1995
- Growth in students: by 140 students per year
- Geographic growth by expanding satellites in Western Cape and franchising Employment Bureau.
- Place 90% of all physically fit and suitable students
- Awareness: Inform all identified donors and publics of project's mission and work
- Raise sponsorship and donations to cover all planned activities.

Development projects are initiated by various disciplines and institutions but in many cases the results do not justify the resources spent on these projects. Success is also difficult to measure as it is not always quantifiable in monetary terms. Objectives could be to improve the quality of life, to enable recipients of the service to read and write, or to provide balanced feeding to families, objectives which are difficult to quantify if measures of success have not been decided upon at the outset. Based on our experience in the non-formal training and education of more than 800 students at the Bergzicht Training project situated in Stellenbosch, this paper will therefore focus on the following two questions:

1. What are the criteria for success of a development project?
2. How can success be measured?

### *What are the Criteria for Success of a Project?*

In order to address this question, we will explore common reasons why projects are not always successful, and deduce factors for success.

Reasons for failure can be found in the areas of resources, planning, community involvement, training needs, programme content, training staff and financial management, and we will address each of these separately.

### *Resources*

No project can survive without adequate resources, both financial and human. Many start out without donor support and skilled personnel, and find that they cannot sustain their efforts over a long period of time. Planning

Many projects start out with no measurable and clearly formulated goals and objectives. No assessment is made of the inherent strengths and weaknesses of the project and there is no identification of the target markets or beneficiaries of the project's service. Without adequate planning and a sense of direction any project is doomed to failure from the outset. With this in mind, Bergzicht hired a firm of business consultants when we started out, who drew up a comprehensive business plan for a three year period which included a vision, a mission, values, long-term goals, objectives, a situation analysis, a people plan, a marketing plan, a resources plan and comprehensive financial projections. This has given us a clear sense of direction and has contributed greatly to our success.

We at Bergzicht believe that the key to success is not only to train, but also to seek employment for successful students. It is thus essential to conduct training courses in areas where there is a market demand for such skills. We therefore conducted extensive market research amongst potential employers in order to ascertain the needs of the employment market, which we have found to be in the areas of homecare, frailcare, educare and tourism. We then developed courses specifically aimed at meeting those needs and we are proud of being able to place into jobs more than 80% of the people we train.

### *Community Support*

It is essential that all stakeholders in a project be identified, that their needs are analysed and that they be positively involved. Many projects fail because they do not have the support of the communities they wish to

serve. Bergzicht has therefore adopted a philosophy of involving a community committee in each and every project on grassroots level, a philosophy which has ensured continued support.

### Needs of the Target Group

In many projects, the training needs of the target group are not assessed at the outset. The educational level, developmental level, language, work status and culture of target groups must be assessed and taken into account. We have found at Bergzicht that new students find it difficult to concentrate, are often afraid and we have to build mutual trust and get them to communicate. This process can take as long as 14 days.

In addition, the trainability of new students should be assessed. We screen applicants and enrol them for our literacy or communication skills courses where applicable, before they are trained in homecare, educare or frailcare. The circumstances of the target group are also often not analysed in terms of transport, accommodation and other infrastructure requirements. Students could also lack the resources to pay for these services.

Physical and health related factors of the learners are not taken into account. (Such as sight, hearing, state of health, conditions such as diabetes, tuberculosis, hunger, malnutrition, etc.) We therefore require a medical certificate from each prospective student to know what conditions we have to cater for. A recent example is where we enrolled people for a literacy course and found that they had massive problems in mastering the material. On closer examination, we found that all of them had bad eyesight and the problem was rectified after we supplied them all with reading glasses supplied by a donor.

### Training Programmes

Many projects use Western inspired programmes instead of relevant programmes for specific groups. We have therefore developed our own courses that are applicable to our environment.

The methodology of formal education is used instead of the methodology applicable to non-formal education. The material must be structured according to a specific methodology but must at the same time be flexible - it should include different tasks and exercises that give the initiative to the learner. The methodology adopted must also be appropriate for adult beginner learners. Many project initiators in the education field do not understand the dynamics of non-formal training which also adds to the potential for failure.

The selection of students for specific courses is also of paramount importance for success. Where students do not show a real interest in our course content, we counsel them on other opportunities and do referrals.

### Trainers

Many projects have a lack of vision about the skills and knowledge that training practitioners need. Trainers also tend to lose enthusiasm and they should be constantly motivated. Trainers need to be trained in the methodology of non-formal training and all our lecturers at Bergzicht have undergone such training at a leading institution specialising in this field.

We have found at Bergzicht that the practice of using volunteer trainers does not work, for the above reasons, and we therefore refrain from doing so.

### Financial

This is a common area of failure for many projects and is largely due to a lack of know-how and financial skills.

Other factors which have been widely publicised recently are corrupt project officials, inadequate record and bookkeeping systems and controls and bad management. At Bergzicht we have adopted a policy of financial transparency and we provide a financial report to all our donors on a monthly basis, followed by a comprehensive project report every six months.

To further add to our management credibility we are registered as a non-profit making company under Section 21 of the Companies Act. This ensures that our statements are

audited by a professional firm of auditors and that we have an accountable management. Many projects also fail due to their dependence on state funding and the lack of a diversified spread of donors. At Bergzicht we believe a long-term relationship should be built with donors and we have a variety of donors assisting in different areas such as administration, training material, staff training and for specific projects.

## National Framework

For projects to be successful in the dispensation, it is of paramount importance that programmes fit into the RDP framework and the legitimacy and credibility of programmes must be a priority. We are moving through an exciting and challenging period of change in the training and educational sector, and it is important to stay in touch with new developments, to lobby support for initiatives and to network with all role players in the field.

## How Can Success be Measured

Success can only be measured against clear goals and objectives that are formulated at the outset. Goals are normally formulated for a five to ten year period whilst objectives are set over a six month to one year period. These goals and objectives need not be formulated in monetary terms but could include "soft" objectives such as to raise the quality of life in a particular community.

This process ensures, however, that the variable "quality of life" be defined in concrete terms such as the ability to read and write, adequate nutrition, etc. These are variables that can be measured and monitored for the success of project interventions.

At Bergzicht we constantly monitor our successes and failures through monthly evaluations as well as through an aftercare service where we monitor satisfaction in the workplace of both the employee and employer.

For development projects to succeed, it is therefore vital to avoid the pitfalls and mistakes as mentioned, to invest time in researching the needs of all stakeholders, to invest time in planning, and to actively involve the beneficiaries and participating communities. This is both an exciting and challenging time for NGOs throughout the country, to adapt and move forward with the goals of the RDP, and to assist in building a better South Africa for all its people



# YOUTH JOB-SKILLS PROGRAMMES WHAT WORKS AND WHY?

*Presented by: Graeme Bloch, JET*

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 fairly directly to employment 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 paper.

## Successful projects

A number of JET projects that have been successful in piloting new ideas or expanding services have been represented on the panel this morning and are noted here.

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. Keyboards in urban Johannesburg provides opportunities to young female school leavers in the secretarial and office-skills arena. A highly professional course sees over 80% placements as Keyboards training has developed a solid reputation. Training includes exposure to business realities as well as cultural outings and communication skills. SLOT, School Leavers Opportunity Training in rural Natal adjusts its courses to suit very localised 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 uses facilities locally available and offers professional and quality courses, ranging from chicken farming and dress making to motor mechanics and word processing, that often 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.

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 at least 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.

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.

Daily Bread in East London and 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.

What makes them work?

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.

Like all good NGOs, their particular work is their primary and overwhelming focus: youth job-skills training cannot be a subsidiary or add-on of other programmes if it is to combat the array of social causes of youth marginalisation and alienation.

These NGOs 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 managing such programmes must be questioned.
- ✍ In most cases it would also appear that the 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

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

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.

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.

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.

- ✍ Literacy and/or "academic" catch-up. This improves confidence, ability to handle relevant issues and access to further routes beyond initial training.
- ✍ 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.
- ✍ Just as the "soft skills" above are crucial, so too may counselling, conflict resolution 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.
- ✍ "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.
- ✍ 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 crime 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.
- ✍ 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 fierce 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.
- ✍ Many NGOs cannot really 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 also need to replace argument by superlative example or impressive but 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 that could ensure delivery on a scale that is appropriate to the magnitude of the problem.

The lesson of the NYSI 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.

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 in terms of coordinated provision of a service.

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 will 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 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 (that go beyond romantic and sweeping portrayals of "Asian Tigers" in which all and everything is possible) ? 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, with jobs and access to further education and training, is one of the finest gifts we could leave for future generations.

# THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

*Presented by: Adrienne Bird*

Legislation governing the National Qualifications Framework, in the name of The SA Qualifications Authority Act, is currently being debated in parliament.

## The NQF

The NQF is designed to form a basic, cohesive structure for educational qualifications:

Level 1 - the General Education Certificate - covers the compulsory 9 years of schooling, including educare as well as ABET Levels 1, 2 & 3; Levels 2 - 4 lead to the Further Education Certificate;

Levels 5 - 7 - Tertiary Education;

Level 8 - Higher Degrees.

The structure of the NQF recognises that people will not necessarily be in full-time learning and has the flexibility to allow for this.

## SAQA's Functions

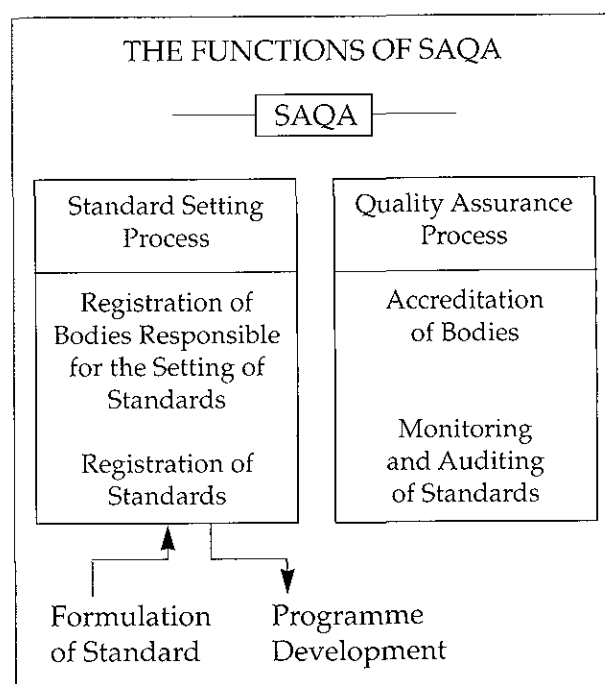
The intention is to establish the South African Qualifications Authority Board by year end in order to implement the NQF. SAQA's functions will involve two core processes:

1. the setting of standards - which will require national structures to be in place to register bodies responsible for setting the standards and to register the standards formulated;
2. quality assurance - the accreditation of standard setting bodies and the ongoing monitoring and auditing of standards.

Structuring standards and qualifications Within the General and Further Education and Training levels of the NQF, qualifications would likely comprise: fundamental units, contextual units and specialisation units.

The process of setting standards, per unit, would be undertaken by agents - perhaps called National Standards Bodies (NSBS).

Proposed level	Qualification (reference)	
level 8	Higher Degree	
level 7	Initial Degree	
level 6	National diploma	
level 5		
level 4	Further Education Certificate	
level 3	A system of credits which	
level 2	combine for qualifications	
level 1	General Education Certificate	
	Schooling Compulsory 9 years including educare Progression towards learning outcomes at GEC level	Adult Basic Education and Training ABET level 3 ABET level 2 ABET level 1



QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE WITHIN THE GENERAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING BANDS	
FUNDAMENTAL UNITS:	____x____ (eg language and maths)
CONTEXTUAL OR CORE: UNITS:	____x____ (eg RDP, financing, decision making at local level, etc.)
SPECIALISATION UNITS:	____z____ (eg welding, typing, sewing, caring etc.)
QUALIFICATION = X+Y+Z for a specialised level Units selected from a bank of available options at different levels.	

Standards could derive from current providers, national and provincial, from industry, and from other stakeholders in particular fields of learning.

In terms of standards for specialisation units, if one took, for example, welding, the NSB responsible for generating this Unit Standard would involve representatives of industry as well as training providers. The Unit Standard, based on learning outcomes, would need to determine:

- what information needs to be known (for welding)
- what abilities are required
- what performance level is to be achieved... and so on.

### Maintaining standards

The maintenance of quality would be the responsibility of bodies - perhaps called Education and Training Qualifications

Authorities (ETQAs) - who, again resourcing the respective stakeholders, would register and accredit providers in the different sectors of the NQF.

### Conclusion

This sketches the NQF Bill in broad outline. I would like to emphasise that both unit standards and general standards will relate to learning outcomes and will not govern curricula - allowing for innovation and interaction in terms of inputs.

I would like to go on, to put forward a concept that will, I hope, extend the debate that has already arisen today surrounding the question of Education for Employment versus Employment for Education.

A number of the panel members have spoken of the importance of linking training programmes with formal industry. Mandla Vilakazi, for example, spoke of SLOT's links

### BODIES TO ESTABLISH STANDARDS (NSBs?)

- ◆ FOCUS: Generate standards
- ◆ CONSTITUTION: Representative of stakeholders
- ◆ SCOPE: Field/Domain of Learning; all levels of NQF
- ◆ PERIOD: Initial then prescribed period
- ◆ To register proposed stds should conform to SAQA's requirements e.g. format, representivity
- ◆ National stds could derive from provider, industry/province/national providers

### BODIES TO MAINTAIN STANDARDS (ETQAs?)

- ◆ FOCUS: Quality Maintenance (ETQAs)
- ◆ WHO?:
  - Provinces
  - Industry
  - National Provider Groups: eg Universities, technikons, teacher colleges
- ◆ SCOPE:
  - Register and Accredite Providers in sector
  - All Fields/domains in sector
- ◆ METHOD:
  - Registration, "secondary" accreditation, moderation
  - Also: registration of assessors (per domain), RPL, Record of Learning i.e. QUALITY AUDIT

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;">SAQA LOGO</div>	<b>UNIT STANDARD</b> Title of Unit: .....	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;">NSB ID/ LOGO</div>
Unit number:		Field:
Level:		Issue date:
Credit:		Expiry date:
Capability: ".....ing"		
<u>Outcomes to be assessed</u> 1. Information: 2. Abilities: 3. Performance outcomes: 4. Assessment: 5. Range indicators: Moderation options:		

### NQF BILL

#### SAQA's FUNCTIONS

- ◆ Oversee development NQF
- ◆ Register bodies to:
  - Establish standards
  - Maintain standards
- ◆ Oversee implementation NQF
  - Registration national stds
  - Ensure comparable internationally (stds and qualifications)
  - Advise Minister on reg. of stds and qualifications
  - Consult

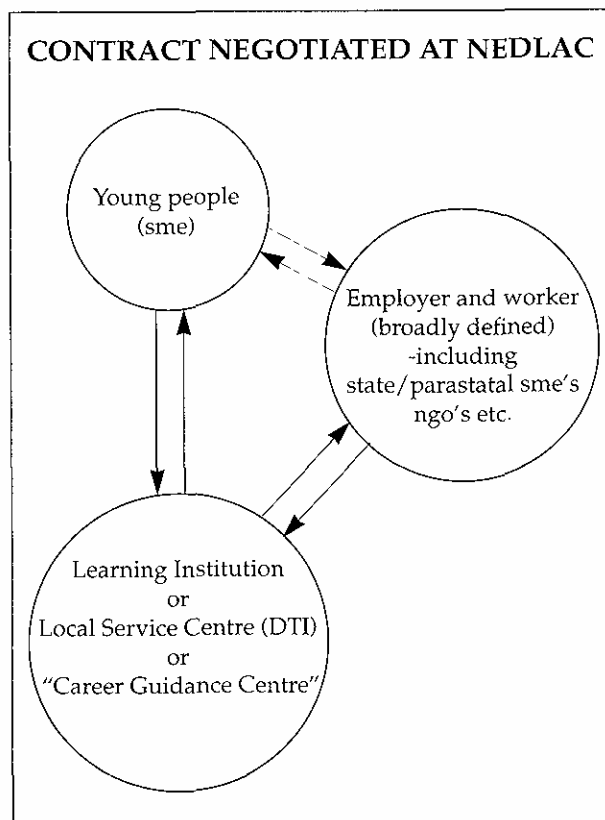
with Eskom and Umgeni Water; speakers from Bertrams and Keyboards have also spoken of links with the formal sector.

I would like to put forward a concept here, which could be considered as a way of providing young people the opportunity to gain work experience in formal industry, in parallel with their institutional learning. There are three parties involved: the young people themselves; the learning institutions; and the employers and workers. In order to forge the kind of links that have been spoken of, I would propose that a contract could be formulated and negotiated among the three parties concerned.

Clearly, there would need to be an incentive for each party. For the young learners - they would gain on-the-job experience; for the learning institutions - they would be providing better trained youth with work experience; for the employers - perhaps the longer term promise of increased productivity is inadequate, and for the workers who would actually provide the training - there is a threat that the young and freshly trained will take their jobs in an already job-scarce economy.

So what incentives could there be for employers and for workers? I would suggest that workers could be compensated, by their employers, for providing on-site training to youth. However, the form of that compensation demands some creative consideration: perhaps the workers could be compensated collectively rather than individually, perhaps they could be compensated with learning (ABET programmes) and further training rather than cash.

I think that in this way a triangular alliance could be created wherein all the parties benefit. Such a contract could be negotiated by the youth themselves in a forum like Nedlac.



# PROFESSIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

*Presented by: Hugh McLean, Liberty Life Foundation*

What systems are applicable to strengthen provision of youth training programmes? The brief I have been given requires a practical look at systems that are applicable to strengthening provision by youth training programmes. I believe, however, that any consideration of applicable systems needs to be made within the context of a still current preoccupation with professionalism as it relates to development and training, particularly in the NGO sector.

In this paper I will argue, firstly, that the working understanding of professionalism in the development field is used too narrowly to emphasise only the connotations of efficiency and formality which the term conveys, and that its ethical and more political meanings are overlooked. Secondly, I shall advance some ideas on systems which will enable organisations, working in training and development, to become good at what they do. The common understanding of the word professionalism has its roots in the mid-eighties. The 1970s in South Africa had seen the first wave of NGOs, ten years on, when much of that first swell of idealism and enthusiasm for their potential was backwash on development's beaches, the hard questions about delivery began to present themselves. Attempts to improve efficiency in service delivery organisations were swept aside by the raging currents of the political struggles of the time. And it was only in the relative calm of the early '90s when we could catch a glimpse of the new formed, but still rugged, development coast-line and the organisational debris on its shores.

I don't mean to be disparaging about the work done by NGOs in this period, but the torrential storms of those years had left little time to assess the real strengths and weaknesses of the structures we had built or to investigate the ability of these structures to deliver the changes they championed. De Klerk's speech in February 1990 changed the mindset of the status quo. Both business and the state swung from a position of antagonism and opposition to the democratic movement to one located somewhere between co-option and cooperation. NGOs in the development and training sector were the service delivery paddle of the democratic movement. The need for these organisations to come to terms with their weaknesses and strengths, and how to paddle, was more urgent than ever. At the same time business, as was the state, was moving independently to recreate its social image and it showed more readiness to share knowledge and resources. So while the NGOs were faced all at once with an astounding range of new possibilities, there was a lot of new debris on development's shores.

One of the bits of junk on the beach was what we now call professionalism. Now don't get me wrong, I have nothing against bits of old junk. They can be quite beautiful and even quite useful. But unless we understand that professionalism is just an old bit of junk that was washed up on our shores, we'll be in danger of being awed about what it could mean, and we don't ask, as we would of a bit of junk: "What the hell can I do with this thing?"

So what the hell can we do with this thing? Professionalism. Professional service delivery. Most of us take professionalism to be an approach which positively affects efficiency and output. That's good.

But also, we often take professionalism to mean that we must be tougher, cost-effective, market-related. Is that good? Some people think professionalism means wearing suits or big turbans, or having a cell phone or a business card. Well, professionalism could, I suppose, mean some or all of these things.



Most would agree that professionalism, in its useful sense, refers to getting it right and delivering on time. I have no problems with these connotations and we all know that the NGO sector and development will benefit from a commitment to these goals.

A problem I do have with professionalism is that it is too often seen only in these terms: in its technical aspect, stripped of all other meaning. I do think that the original idea of the word contained ethical content. The profession of law or medicine, for instance, is combined with a commitment to justice or to preserving and saving life. In fact the meaning begins with the ethics and the technical considerations follow. They are but a set of practical and learned techniques for getting the job done so that its ethical principle can be upheld. Any talk of professional systems is then, in my view, worthless without an understanding of, and a commitment to, the ethical and political issues that are involved. So, in addition to getting it right and delivering on time, we should add hard work, a commitment to human rights and taking a stand against waste and corruption. Perhaps then we can say that we have fashioned this piece of junk into something useful and beautiful.

#### For-profit/Non-profit continuum

If we were to place all youth training programmes on a continuum with, on one side, the strictly for-profit schemes and on the other a running-dog capitalist-hating non-profit organisation, we might imagine the NGOs we know arrayed along this continuum but concentrated more towards the non-profit end.

The for-profit schemes on the one end are out to make money, they are market oriented, they put through large numbers of students, they believe competition leads to quality, their certificates have weight with employment officers in large companies and they believe they are efficient.

The organisations on the other end are free or low cost, they are more student-oriented, not as cost effective and do not have the narrow skills focus of the organisations at the other end.

A technical understanding of professional might lead us to think that professionalism increases incrementally as we move from the non-profit end of the continuum to the other. A more complete application of the word "professionalism" would entail looking for a synthesis of elements and a balance somewhere in the middle. It is this approach which will lead to a useful understanding of professional service delivery and the systems applicable to strengthening provision in youth training programmes in the NGO sector.

I would argue that the profit incentive of the commercial schemes leads to an approach which aims for quantity rather than quality in through put. It leads to a minimisation of tutoring time and student-centredness in the interests of cutting costs. If a commercial scheme champions a student-centred, or a quality-learning approach, you pay for this through your nose. Clearly, these spin-offs of "professionalism" are not the kind we should wish to emulate in developmental programmes. The problem is that it is these kinds of approaches which we believe lead to that much vaunted, but illusive quality, sustainability, in a programme. In fact, in the context of strangulated funding, many NGOs have adopted a "commercialise or die" approach to their work.

Now this is a hot issue, and I don't want to pour boiling oil into the great wounds, gashes and cuts that are to be seen in most NGO budgets these days. But our consideration of professionalism apparently places it on the keen edge of the same knife which has inflicted those wounds. However, professionalise, if we understand it ethically, does not simply equal commercialise. And it becomes clear when we consider the demands placed on us by a commitment to development, that there are advantages to be retained in the non-commercialised, and non-profit approach to youth training schemes. They operate at lower cost, they are more student oriented, they promote a broader approach to skilling and they can be more strategically focused on target constituencies in a way that commercial schemes can not. Our bit of beach debris, professionalism, has to be appropriately fashioned then to make it useful.

NGOs, or non-profit organisations, are absolutely essential in the youth training field. We have to understand how their role necessarily differs from more commercial pursuits, and locate and define our understanding of professionalism in this context.

Now I don't want to bend the stick too far in emphasising what some may think is the more fuzzy side of the word professionalism. I think we'd all agree that sincerity and enthusiasm is not enough for development delivery or for the developing of skills in training programmes. The more technical aspects of the concept of professionalism allow us to advance and explore some techniques which youth training schemes could use to become better at what they do. The first principle we need to understand here is that we do have to establish and secure a more scientific approach to development and training. I would like to explore three methodological approaches with you which I believe will contribute to improving the work of youth skills development initiatives. I think that these kinds of approaches will help to professionalise the youth training programme sector in the fullest sense of that word.

### Three approaches to professionalising service delivery

The three techniques I would like to discuss are the following:

1. The use of statistical indicators and goal setting
2. The implementation of a tracking and placement programme
3. The establishment of a data base and the use of hard data in evaluation and planning.

Obviously there are many other ideas which would contribute to professionalising service delivery. The Joint Education Trust has been a major proponent of the setting of standards and national qualifications ranging from early childhood development to adult literacy. So my list is by no means exclusive.

#### 1. The use of statistical indicators

For many people statistics are an inaccessible and esoteric occupation. Yet, if we think about it, concepts such as the inflation rate, average income, or the percentage of voters who turned up at the polls, have meaning for most people. These are all statistical indicators and they help us to find out where we are and to measure our progress in relation to the goals we have set.

The real discussion in any organisation is around selecting what it is you want to measure and how you should go about measuring it. This discussion should relate to your programme's central objective and the political and ethical principles to which you are committed.

Now, I am not talking about facts and figures that will "convince the donors", I am talking about the measure you will use to gauge your success.

#### 2. The use of a tracking and placement programme

Tracking is not just the plotting of a student's progress after the completion of a course for evaluative purposes, it should be a follow-up and feedback procedure that is specifically geared to supporting students in their search for work and to gather information from these experiences that is useful for tuning and balancing the programme's courses and course content.

Placement is a bit of a misnomer, for it implies that students are passively "placed", that they are granted jobs by virtue of their having attended a particular course or because they hold a certificate. It shouldn't imply that the responsibility for finding work belongs to the training programme and not to the students themselves.

However, skills development programmes do half a job, and that badly, when they train only and are oblivious to what happens to students when they leave. Student employment is the whole point of training. It is essential to ensure that the training received is appropriate for the job and that it is of a sufficient standard. A placement programme is therefore an essential link between training and employment.

The difficulties in tracking down ex-trainees might seem an exacting and pointless task, if

its only purpose is for reporting to donors. An effective follow-on and mentoring programme will create a situation where the students themselves initiate contact with the organisation. They would do this if it were worth their while. Tracking participants in a long-term and viable development programme could become as simple as keeping a visitors book.

### 3. The data-base and the use of data in planning

It's 1995, we're less than five years away from the year 2000. Many people call this the "information age". It is very easy to get carried away with the Internet and multimedia, and to see these technological advances as the answer to all our problems. Now whatever we feel about the new technology, we will not achieve our development goals without information. A data-base in an organisation does not have to be very fancy and new technology can make it enjoyable and comparatively easy to maintain. It will not be possible to achieve real development impact without the systematic recording of the appropriate data or a process for planning and strategic realignment of an organisations goals which is based on hard data.

It will be very clear to you by now that our application of the concept of professional service delivery is at one level around basic principles such as recording and measurement. So professionalism should, in the end, be an achievable and manageable goal. However, without an ethical conviction, and a political commitment to what it is that you want to achieve, professionalism is just a bit of old junk you'd best leave on the beach.

# THE ROLE OF THE STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

*Presented by: Febe Potgieter, ANC Youth League*

## Introduction

"The street children of Brazil, the children of the intafada, the young soldiers in Liberia, Somalia - gone is the flower power generation of the 1960s and 'The Youth are the Future' sentiments of the 1970s" And - I might add - the young lions, the flowers of the nations of the 1970s and 1980s of South Africa. "in its place (is) an increasingly popular - racist, classist, masculinist and ageist - discourse on (working class, black) youth as the 'Lost Generation of the 1990s.'" (*Williams, M. 1995: 10*)

This paper will look at the definition of youth in the present context, examine what is meant by a national youth development strategy, give an overview of some of the current approaches and locate the role of the state and civil society within this context.

## Definition of youth

There are a number of schools of thought on the definition of youth: for some it is simply a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood; for others it is a social construct to regulate the transition from child to worker and citizen in industrial nation states and yet for others it is simply a chronological definition - i.e. if you're older than 14 or 16 and younger than 21, 26 or 35.

In South Africa, 'youth' as a category distinct from children has risen to prominence with the leading role played by young people in the liberation struggle during the seventies and eighties.

The legal definition of youth in South Africa to date is not of much help. The Age of Majority Act (57 of 1972) provides that both men and women acquire majority at the age of 21. It also determines legal status with children under seven years having no legal capacity, whilst children and youth above seven and below twenty-one years have limited legal capacity.

The Child Care Act (74 of 1983 and in the process of being amended) provides amongst others that a child above ten years should consent to his/her adoption.

Persons between the ages of seven and twenty-one have the right to enter into legal contracts, provided they are assisted by their parents or guardian. A girl of twelve years and a boy of fourteen may get married with consent from their parents /guardian and the Minister of Home Affairs.

Customary practice requires different criteria to determine the age of majority. Among most practising Xhosa custom, a 'boy' becomes a 'man' when he completes the circumcision rites. Girls and women, on the other hand, are at all times subjected to the authority of the head of the household, who in most cases is male. (*Mabandla, B.1991: 3*)

The distinction between 'children and 'youth' in our context has resulted in the emergence of fairly distinct social movements to lobby for the rights of these two groups as having distinct needs (eg the National Coalition for the Rights of Children and the now defunct National Youth Development Forum). In practice, these organisations tend to use the schoolleaving age of 16 years as the main distinction. Though there is a recognition of large areas of overlap, the youth movement has shown a reluctance in too closely identifying or cooperating with the children's movement exactly because of the overlap and the fear of being 'grouped with the children'. The United Nations body of rules and covenants on youth uses the average range of 14 to 26 years. However, it recognises that on both ends of the age range, it may differ between developed and under-developed

countries. To mention a few, the Namibian Youth Policy defines youth as ages 15 to 30 years, Australia 12 to 25 years, the Swedish State Youth Council as 7 to 25 years, Uganda 13 to 35 and Norway 7 to 30 years.

The most commonly used definition of youth today recognises the 'age definition' of (14) 16 to 30 (35) years, a stage between childhood and adulthood and therefore including puberty, adolescence and young adults and as a conjunctural social construct - hence the flexibility in the age definition. Sixteen to thirty years were used in both the recent major studies on youth: CASE: Growing up Tough, National Youth Survey (1992) and the HSRC Cooperative Research Programme on SA Youth (1994).

It is also recognised that within this broad age definition, 'the youth' is not a homogenous group. Different age cohorts (14 -18; 18 - 24; 25 - 30) will have different needs; there are differences along racial, class, urban-rural divides: in fact youth are in schools and educational institutions, farms and factories, the ranks of the unemployed, in our prisons, streets, maternity clinics. (Williams, M. 1995: *Overview of the situation of youth today*)

The issues and statistics, I assume, are well-known to all of us. I will here summarise the main aspects:

- ✂ there are close to 11 million people of the ages 16 - 30 years, close/more than a quarter of the population;
- ✂ the majority of the unemployed are under the age of 35 years; 52% of the potentially employable young persons of all races are unemployed (67% in N Cape);
- ✂ and with only between 8 -10% of schoolleavers over the past decade finding employment in the formal sector, the majority of the young unemployed have never worked before;
- ✂ unemployment is 14% higher amongst young women than amongst young men of the same age group;
- ✂ 37% of young working women of all races earn between R100 and R500 per month, compared with 18% of young men;
- ✂ 33% of young working Africans earn R500 per month or less, while this is true of 17% Coloureds, 14% Asians and 5% of whites; 1.2 million young people dropped out of school before entering secondary school; and since 1988 the drop out amongst secondary school students was estimated at 300 000 per year.
- ✂ During the period 1991 /92, 91 398 young persons ranging in ages from 7 to 20 years were convicted of serious crimes.
- ✂ Youth (particularly young women) are in the highest risk category for contracting AIDS; a large proportion of them however do not consider themselves personally at risk.
- ✂ 5% of young people are currently being beaten by their partners, 1 % of young women interviewed in the CASE survey admitted being raped and a further 25% of them knew of other young women who have been raped.

### A National Youth Development Strategy

There are two distinct features of the situation of youth which must inform our strategy. Firstly, the extent to which the political, social and economic system continues to push young people to the margins of our society. In the job market - be it the requirement of 'experience' to get a job or the fact that there are no jobs, or if there are, that they simply don't have the 'skills' for those jobs. The fact that in education, transformation of the secondary system is not taking place at a fast enough rate and the tertiary sector continues to function in crisis mode. Or the widespread poverty, lack of access to basic amenities, breakdown of communities, violence which is and has been the life experience of the majority of young people.

Secondly, a recognition that even though we may be able to address the above issues - get the economy growing, address basic needs, sort out the education system - a sizeable group of the present generation of youth will have difficulties in making use of the opportunities presented by this, if we don't address their 'backlog issues'. And it is not really something we can postpone, given the extent to which this group are increasingly seen as an 'anti-social' sector: the teenage mothers, the delinquents, the car hijackers, the drop-outs, the drug users and pushers. In my view, a national youth development

strategy must therefore combine (creatively) the following approaches:

- ✍ transformation of the various institutions in our society within the context of RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT, through which we must seek to create a society that values its young and gives them full opportunity to develop their potential and make a meaningful contribution to their society;
- ✍ the integration of youth into national development planning; (and later in the paper I will point out how it is not done by looking at two policy papers - one from the private sector and one from government) and
- ✍ a targeted programme aimed at addressing the backlogs of the PRESENT GENERATION OF YOUTH.

Current approaches in Youth Development Considerable work has been done by a range of research and policy organisations and through extensive consultations with youth organisations to identify the key areas for TARGETED intervention.

These can be categorised under the broad themes of:

- ✍ education and training
- ✍ economic participation
- ✍ social and welfare services
- ✍ health
- ✍ participation

In civil society, there are a host of youth and service organisations who do valuable work in a number of the above areas. The impact of these programmes is however on a small scale, largely uncoordinated and with limited capacity. The HSRC is currently busy with an updated study on services available to youth. The last study that was done on this issue (*Jansen, J: 1991*) indicated that there are vast racial, regional and urban-rural disparities as well as gaps in the kind of services available to young people. It must be said, that one of the failures of the National Youth Development Forum was exactly its inability to assist with a capacity building programme for youth programmes and to facilitate the coordination of service providers in the same sector. Increasingly government departments have - in their white papers and other policy documents - taken on board the expressed commitment to youth as a priority target group. This is particularly true of the Departments of Justice, Labour, Welfare, Health and Public Works. One of the more effective activities of the NYDF was the extent to which it placed youth on the agenda and coordinated inputs into these different policy processes.

The main strategic weakness is at the level of INTEGRATION. Most of the above policy documents and initiatives tend to be specific to their sector or line function. There are currently only a few initiatives of which I am aware, where there is a conscious attempt to integrate. One is the Interministerial Committee on Youth at Risk, dealing with young offenders under the Ministry of Welfare; another working group recently convened by the Ministry of Safety and Security to look at 'militarised youth' (i.e. young people in self-defence and protection units in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape); and the other a Steering Committee on a National Youth Service programme which was jointly convened by the NYDF and the SANDF Service Corps.

### The Role of the State

The absence at this stage - even at a conceptual level - of how to take forward a national youth development strategy, I would argue, should be placed squarely before the door of government. South Africa - a strange exception given our history - is one of the few countries where government has not, immediately after liberation or democratisation, instituted a programme aimed at its youth. This is also reflected in the fact that - having rejected appeals from the youth movement to appoint a youth ministry - Cabinet will only this week consider the National Youth Commission Bill; exactly sixteen months after the announcement by the President that he will set up the Commission.

Having said this, what do we see as the role of the state in a national youth development strategy? I want to suggest that the following are the main roles:

- ✍ Provide a national policy framework for a youth development strategy, leading to the

adoption by the GNU of a National Youth Policy. This will have to be located within the context of a human resource development strategy, labour market policies and overall development planning.

- ✍ The adoption of a targeted national programme on youth as one of the Presidential Lead Projects, with distinct interdepartmental focus.
- ✍ Setting in place the structures to coordinate and monitor such a strategy and programme. Expediting the setting up of the National Youth Commission and Youth Commissions in all provinces. (Mpumalanga has a MEC for Youth Affairs, North West and Northern Cape have adopted legislation.) Consideration should also be given in those departments where youth is a key constituency to have desks or directorates - like labour, education and others.
- ✍ Provide an enabling environment for voluntary youth activities and support and partnerships with and for the expansion of
- ✍ existing services provided by youth NGOs.
- ✍ A recognition that some youth programmes are most effective when run by young people by making peer programmes a key part of its strategy - both in planning and implementation stages.
- ✍ Investigate the role that can be played by local government structures, especially at the level of delivery and coordination of services to young people.

### The Role of Civil Society

The youth movement of the nineties has shown, on the one hand, considerable weaknesses: inability to adapt to new conditions, failure to produce new leadership, lack of capacity, dwindling membership, and on the other hand: greater innovations, particularly in the plethora of youth service organisations which have emerged over the past five years.

The following are some of the main challenges facing the youth movement in civil society:

- ✍ working on more creative ways of engaging young people in their activities, particularly the more marginal sectors of youth;
- ✍ building capacity, leadership and institutions capable of responding to the new demands of our times;
- ✍ coordinate their activities to become more effective, make use of partnerships with each other, government, the private sector, to deliver more effective services to youth; and
- ✍ ensure that it builds a national voice in the form of the National, Provincial and Local Youth Councils. The reconstruction and transformation of our country depends on the participation of all sectors of our society.

### Conclusion

A national youth development strategy and programme can only be effective through cooperation between the state and civil society and in particular the youth movement. We have fought and sacrificed to ensure the dawn of a new South Africa. The opportunities to make this a dawn of hope for all our youth are within our reach.

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# THE WAY FORWARD: ISSUES/ACTIONS/OUTCOMES

*Summary by Graeme Bloch*

Friends

This is a very difficult summary to do. I am not going to attempt to summarise the inputs and suggestions, rather to pick up on some key issues and directions.

Some people were suggesting, for example, that JET should organise a process and literally take some key project people around on a bus to learn from each other's experience. Well, I must say, that JET is a jet and not a bus - more seriously though, while we hear what is being said, JET is at this point fairly cautious about taking over much initiative. We're not keen to become an organiser of processes, as this isn't really our skill, though we certainly could look at ways of being more proactive. As a start, we will be assembling a booklet of all the papers presented today and will take the suggestion of including the list of participants.

I think we must also bear in mind the limitations of a conference. At the best of times, it is only possible to make decisions at a conference where this has been the culmination of a lot of planning and discussion. Conferences are seldom places where a detailed plan of action can be developed. So we were realistic in our hopes from this conference: to share experiences, to involve a range of policy-makers and implementers in discussion, to open networking possibilities, to give a sense of where the field is at and what exists on the ground at this point in time.

The conference has certainly succeeded in its aims.

On the one hand, I do feel a bit overwhelmed. Overwhelmed at how much has to be done, and at the realistic way in which challenges were presented. Youth job-skills training is extremely difficult and it is also expensive. We saw from this morning's panel, that even the best of our NGOs are probably only reaching tens of thousands of youth (at most), whereas the problem is of millions of unemployed workseekers. And realistically, job-skills training cannot create jobs. Only a growing economy can do that. No matter how good our programmes, if there are not the jobs available, we will only raise expectations and dash hopes. I am glad that speakers at this conference were also very cautious about the likely success rates of first-time youth-run entrepreneurship endeavours and certainly critical of seeing this as a magical alternative to formal employment and work experience.

If I am a bit overwhelmed and even concerned, I also feel amazed. This conference has confirmed the very many excellent people and programmes that are out there on the ground.

Like Archbishop Tutu, I also believe there are times we should give ourselves a good round of applause, and this is one of those occasions. There is an awesome amount of work going on, there are detailed strategies and successful models to put on the table, and there is a lot of thinking being done by people with a real commitment to the youth and their needs.

I liked Adrienne Bird's input as a good example of the kind of creative directions we could explore. She presented useful information and frameworks around the new accreditation systems being developed. More importantly, she decided to fly a kite at the conference and tried out some ideas she had been thinking about. Her "triangle of incentives" (for youth, business and union trainers) was creative, exciting and stimulating.

Hugh McLean reminded us of the importance of a clear framework of goals and ethics. Our values need to be at the centre of our practices

and service delivery. The term "professional" occurs on a continuum and we need to maintain a balance.

I also was pleased that Febe, as a self-confessed "youth activist", tackled the questioner who suggested that immigrants were the reason for youth not being able to compete for jobs. Of course, there are real issues around immigration. But we need to very forcefully reject the link being made by the questioner. In the first place, once again we would be misdirecting ourselves, fighting fireflies on the periphery, when the real problem of youth job-skills training and the reasons for unemployment require far more sophisticated strategies. And secondly, once we start on the road where xenophobia or even narrow self-interest become our guiding criteria, once we stop the search for solutions that are humane, it is youth who will be among the first to suffer. If we don't care about foreign people, why the hell should we care about young people either? Febe Potgieter spoke as a former "youth activist of the 80s" (I'm not sure what happened to the 90s, if she is denying her activism or her youth). She made it clear that young people need to be involved in the processes of development planning. At the same time, youth need to get themselves organised if they are to have a voice. Nor does organised mean the scramble for places in a Youth Ministry, or whatever, which so often takes place at the expense of the youth themselves.

If one thing was clear from the day's proceedings, it was that solutions are multi-layered, just as the problems are complex. More than that, we need to accept that our plans are targets to aspire to, and solutions are never total. We live in a real world with all its inconsistencies. South Africa is a third world country, it is not at the cutting edge of the world economy, it does not have brilliant advantages over many other competitors. We are unlikely to solve all our pressing problems.

So how do we, as a relatively middle-income to poor third world country, nonetheless ensure that we share our resources in a humane and effective manner? How do we create stability and peace, make sure this is a good place to live, that people can have hope in the future? We need to say that the RDP, despite its many problems (that people here know only too well), is unique in the world. It is currently not fashionable to put human beings and their needs, and in particular the poor and disadvantaged, at the centre of one's policies and as the beneficiaries of a country's central thrust. We should recognise the significance of the RDP as a programme of delivery with world interest.

This conference felt that coordination and integration is essential, that we need to unify our efforts. The government should take the lead and use its legitimacy in this process. Its role should be planned carefully and with the resource limitations in mind. The state, at various levels and structures, should seek to build capacity, to provide assistance and frameworks, rather than to seek control. Nor should the state itself necessarily always be the actual delivery agent.

We realised that job-skills training is not a narrow task and requires a variety of inputs, programmes and support structures. NGOs are undoubtedly a crucial part of ensuring a holistic and varied approach. NGOs must learn not to sit back and wait for the state to put things in place. Civil society likes to watchdog everyone else except themselves and we need to look at our own responsibilities and challenges.

In conclusion, we need to remind ourselves of the starting point of this conference. As we've travelled all over the country and met youth practitioners and young people themselves, our own experience has been that our youth are FINE. Despite what this society has thrown at them, the violence and viciousness with which our system has forced our young people to grow up, somehow our youth on the whole have come through balanced and decent. They have hopes and aspirations that we owe it to them to try and meet. Like our country, they certainly have many problems. But if we look at our youth, at their resilience and their ideals, we realise too that our strange, crazy country is also fine!

There are various people to thank today: the service people such as the technicians and people who served our food; project officers from JET who passed around the roving microphones; the conference organisers. It might sound out of line, but I would also like to thank JET and its Director, Nick Taylor. It is appreciated that a funding agency creates the space for this kind of critical reflection and debate around policy.

We ask you to travel well, and thank you for your attendance and your empathetic and disciplined participation.