

**NEW  
APPOINTMENTS  
AT JET**



**A**lec Ngwenyama takes over the post of Accountant from Amarlal Soma who retires at the end of August. Alec's appointment is effective from 27 June 2005

**B**heki Hadebi has been appointed Senior Project Officer for the IEP Project based at the RTI offices in Pretoria. Bheki started at RTI on 1 July 2005.

*"Beyond this education field of interaction we can anticipate JET entering even newer fields of empowerment. Workers have been calling for increased workplace investment in education and training. The entry of education NGOs, providing innovative education and training in the workplace, may herald a new and effective response to this call."*

Minister Naledi Pandor  
Minister of Education  
JET Annual Review Meeting  
March 1997



**N**evina Smith has been appointed Project Manager in the Schools Development Division. Nevina commenced duties on 1 July 2005

**D**enise Barry has been appointed Senior Project Manager in the Research and Evaluations Division. Denise will commence duties on 1 August 2005.

ISBN: 0-620-34805-4

*Published by:*  
**JET EDUCATION SERVICES,**  
3rd Floor, Braamfontein Centre,  
23 Jorissen Street, Braamfontein.  
PO Box 178, Wits, 2050.  
Tel: (011) 403-6401/9.  
Fax: (011) 339-7844.  
www.jet.org.za

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
Thandiwe January-McLean (Chair), Nick Taylor (CEO), Saeeda Anis-Prew, Yunus Ballim, Brian Figaji, Nqabomzi Gawe, Margie Keeton, Jennifer Njelesani-Vergeer (Zambian), Jeremy Ractliffe, Mike Rosholt, Jim Wotherspoon (British)

July  
2005

**FOCUS ON LINKING LEARNING TO THE WORLD OF WORK**

The chemical industries still see a significant need for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in their sector. In light of this, the Chemical Industries Education and Training Authority (CHIETA) last year embarked on an RPL project to develop an RPL Policy as well as other tools to guide the implementation of RPL in the sector. CHIETA appointed JET Education Services and its partners to provide support to chemical companies in RPL planning and assessment.

The RPL project raised some interesting challenges and highlights important lessons for the continuing implementation of RPL in a greater number of companies in the chemical industries sector.

The National Standards Bodies Regulations (No. 18787 of March 1998, issued in terms of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act 58 of 1995), define RPL as the

*'comparison of the previous learning and experience of a learner, howsoever obtained, against the learning outcomes required for a specified qualification, and the acceptance for the purposes of qualification of that which meets the requirements.'*

This definition makes clear a number of principles which apply to the development and implementation of RPL:

## RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING IN THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES



By: *Aneesha Mayet*  
Unit Head, RPL  
JET Education Services  
and the CHIETA team

- That learning occurs in all kinds of situations – formally<sup>1</sup>, informally<sup>2</sup> and non-formally<sup>3</sup>;
- That measurement of the learning takes place against specific learning outcomes required for a specific qualification; and
- That credits are awarded for such learning if it meets the requirements of the qualification.

Therefore, the process of recognising prior learning is about:

- Identifying what the candidate knows and can do;

<sup>1</sup>Learning gained formally is assessed against formally defined criteria and standards within learning programmes. The outcomes of the learning are stated at the beginning of the learning programme and learners are expected to achieve those outcomes. Certificates or records of credits are issued to the learner.

<sup>2</sup>Learning gained informally is learning that learners usually undertake because they have a particular interest in the field or topic. It may include, for example, seminars or the information contained in pamphlets and information brochures.

<sup>3</sup>Non-formal learning may be defined as learning that occurs in a semi-formal process. Learners may have attended a series of short courses offered either in-house or by private NGO providers, which equipped the learner to perform a specific task or a series of tasks. Non-formal learning is also the process of learning through mentoring and coaching, through which learners or workers learn to perform a relevant task in the workplace.

- Matching the candidate's skills, knowledge and experience to specific standards and the associated assessment criteria of a qualification;
- Assessing the candidate against those standards; and
- Crediting the candidate for skills, knowledge and experience built up through formal, informal and non-formal learning that occurred in the past.

As stated in the SAQA RPL Policy of 2002,

*'RPL in South Africa has, unlike similar initiatives in other countries, a very specific agenda. RPL is meant to support transformation of the education and training system of the country. This calls for an approach to the development of RPL policy and practices that explicitly expresses the visible and invisible barriers to learning and assessment. Such an approach must generate the commitment of all roleplayers to remove these barriers and to build a visible, usable and credible system as an effective and creative vehicle for lifelong learning. It is important that consensus be generated around the criteria and support systems within which the integrity and quality of all assessments will be protected.'*

Some of the reasons for which RPL is used include:

- Redress of historical disadvantages, such as the institutional exclusion of large numbers of people from education and training and jobs;
- Validation of skills and knowledge for the broader development of individuals;

- Access to jobs and progression in career paths;
- Recognition with regard to job grading and salary;
- Planning through skills audits; and
- Promotion of employment equity.

The RPL project initiated by the CHIETA for National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Levels 1 – 4 began with a research and materials development phase. The CHIETA developed a Policy on RPL and a Toolkit, comprising a procedures guide and an implementation manual that described 'six critical elements' for the implementation of RPL. This formed the foundation material for the training of 800 RPL practitioners (Moderators, Assessors, Evidence Facilitation Collectors and Designers) enabling them to undertake RPL and other assessments in the workplace. @ The Training Edge (ATTE) was appointed to conduct the training.

Soon after launching the training project, the CHIETA realised that a support arm was required. JET Education Services was appointed to assist chemical sector companies specifically with RPL planning and assessment and The Learning Network (TLN) was appointed to take responsibility specifically for reviewing RPL Quality Management Systems (QMS) amongst the companies participating in the project.

The CHIETA RPL Support Project kicked off at the beginning of August 2004, and ran over a period of eight months. The key objectives were to:

- Support CHIETA member companies to prepare RPL project plans towards implementing RPL assessments;
- Review and provide support with RPL QMS; and
- Establish a referral network of appropriate, accredited service providers who would provide further support to individual companies outside of the RPL Support Project.

A number of challenges were experienced in the planning and implementation of the support project, resulting in a limited number of companies having developed full RPL project plans by the time the project came to an end. These challenges highlighted a number of important considerations.

- Management structures have to be supported to understand the education and training system before buy-in can occur to conduct RPL at the workplace.
- Organised Labour needs to be involved from the inception to ensure their buy-in to the process.
- There is a need for greater collaboration between Management [decision-makers] and RPL drivers [implementers] in the workplace, and with the workforce generally [beneficiaries].
- The support function must kick-in prior to the training in order to ensure that the right candidates are selected and, in turn, gain the optimum impact of training.

February to June of this year saw JET offices almost overrun by renovation contractors. JET has been a tenant at the Braamfontein Centre since 1994 and our offices were in need of a facelift of major proportions! I do not believe that any of the staff realized the scale of the upheaval this would entail until the renovators arrived. Years of accumulated paperwork and paraphernalia had to be packed, labelled and carted off to storage. Each member of staff was allowed one box of current work – work that they were busy with or had to complete at that stage – as a mobile office for the period of the renovations. After more than a decade of sitting in little boxes called offices, we were now going to join the 21st century and work in open plan offices.

It was decided to start the renovations on the south side of the building. The boardroom was set up to house 50% of the staff, with desks, computers, telephones and other necessary

## JET'S NEW OPEN PLAN OFFICES

*By: Kathy Tracey  
JET*



demolishing walls and removing carpets.

This was a stressful period for staff - computers crashed for no rhyme or reason, electricity failed at the most inopportune times. Nerves were frayed and tempers snapped when least expected. After what seemed like an eternity, the south section was finally declared habitable. Its

original occupants were instructed to move back into the new open plan offices. The north section occupants then had to pack up and move into the newly erected boardroom in the south side. After what seemed like another eternity, this final section was mercifully completed and staff were allowed to move into their brand new work areas.

equipment to allow us to continue with our work. Once everything was removed, the south section was sealed off and the builders started

The whole process has taken four months – four months of dust, noise, general inconvenience and frayed nerves. The renovators have finally departed and we can all breathe a sigh of relief and get on with our work – adapting to the open plan environment in our freshly renovated offices.



**J**ET Education Services (JET) is a leading edge NGO in South Africa, first established with a view to creating the conditions for an integrated, non-sexist, non-racist, quality education system that is responsive, legitimate, equitable and relevant to the local and global economy. Quality access, inclusivity, the promotion of sound learning outcomes and programmes for employment security are central objectives guiding the organisation's purpose.

Registered as a non-profit, Public Benefit Organisation and Section 21 company, JET offers a range of services that include specialist expertise in the public sector, and the education sector in particular. The JET menu of services includes the production of leading-edge research, the ability to manage and implement large-scale projects and programmes, training for workforce development, policy advocacy and fund-holding.

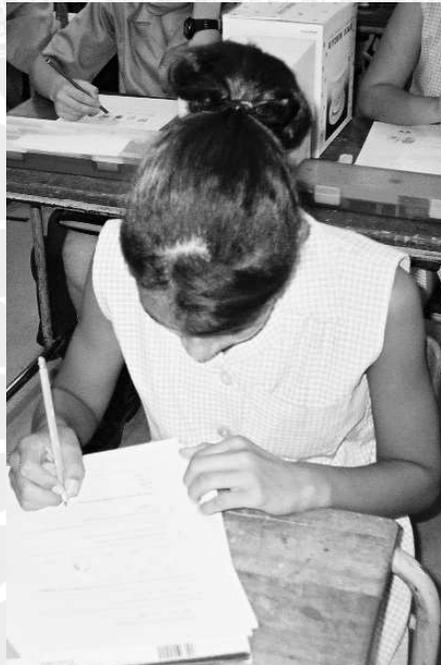
Some 12 years on from inception, JET is recognised for its 'hands-on' track record in promoting educational reform through targeted interventions that service some of the most disadvantaged and resource-poor schools and communities in the country. Support to government at national, provincial, district and school level in the education sector seeks to enhance service delivery and build capacity for realising the right to education, training and sustainable livelihoods.

As a country in transition South Africa faces the enormous challenge of redressing the imbalances of an apartheid past.

JET promotes a collective response for the attainment of system-wide improvements

## **EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN SOUTH AFRICA**

***Promoting inclusion  
and quality outcomes  
for all***



By: Deborah Hunt  
Senior Project Manager  
JET Education Services

and recognises the value of partnerships that harness the collective energies and expertise of all involved. Funded by some of the biggest names in the international and local donor community and private sector, the goal of providing beneficiaries with a sound basis for full participation in cultural, political and economic activities through the provision of a 21st Century education is a unifying one.

Among other projects JET currently leads a consortium of experts, practitioners and research institutions, called Sisonke ('Togetherness') in a recently won two-year contract for the national Department of Education (DoE) to develop feasible Human Resource Development guidelines in the area of inclusive education (White Paper 6).

Building on the gains made in the country since the first democratic elections in 1994, when access to basic education was universalised, the aims of White Paper 6 are to ensure that learners requiring high intensive support because of physical, intellectual and/or hidden disabilities - related to trauma, orphanhood and/or the burden of running a child-headed household in impoverished socio-economic conditions - are enabled to attain educational outcomes, lead lives of dignity, find gainful employment or self-employment, and achieve their human aspirational goals.

Without any illusions as to the ambitious nature of current policy directives and new work taken on by JET in the interests of transformation, Nick Taylor, CEO of JET, discusses the implications of a recent baseline study conducted by the Evaluation and Research Division of JET. The study looked at learner performance in Grade 3 Literacy and Numeracy and Grade 6 Mathematics and Science. Taylor notes: "In the schools observed, two fundamental gaps were observed: learners' reading proficiency and basic knowledge of the number system. Two urgent priorities, then, are to institute a comprehensive programme for reading and writing and basic mathematical operations.

**INTRODUCING JET  
TO  
INTERNATIONAL  
BUSINESS**



*By: Kathy Tracey  
PR Manager  
JET Education Services*

**S**outh Africa was selected to host the 4th World Chambers of Commerce Congress in 2005. This event was held at the International Convention Centre in Durban, from Monday 20 June to Wednesday 23 June. The congress is the only international forum for chamber executives worldwide to share best-practice experience, develop networks and learn about new areas of innovation from other chambers as they face the challenge of remaining relevant to companies in their regions.

As the congress also hosted an exhibition of various organizations, JET Education

Services (JET) sent a team to Durban to exhibit JET's products and services at the congress and to attend the conference. The team left for Durban in the early hours of the Monday morning and proceeded straight to the International Convention Centre to set up their exhibition area in readiness for the congress opening at 14h30 that afternoon. The centre was a hive of activity as delegates – from countries such as Russia, Canada, Thailand and the United States of America, amongst others – arrived to register and attend the pre-opening sessions. The main aim of the exhibition was for exhibitors to network and identify possible communication channels with delegates, which could mark the beginning of successful

business relationships. On the second day of the congress, South African President, Mr Thabo Mbeki, gave a keynote address and was then escorted through the exhibition area to meet some of the exhibitors. Imagine the delight of the JET team when the President stopped at our booth, shook hands with those in attendance and asked for background information on the organization. He listened with rapt attention, without any hint of haste. This was certainly the highlight of the congress for our team! We surpassed our aim by attracting the attention of the most powerful businessman in the country!



*Mr Mbeki in discussion with Kathy Tracey (right) at the 4th World Chambers of Commerce Congress*

The Integrated Education Programme (IEP) is a continuation of the District Development Support Project (DDSP), in which JET was involved over a number of years. Its overall goal is to achieve 'improved learner performance in Numeracy, Literacy, Mathematics and Science in participating schools'. The Evaluation and Research Division (ERD) at JET was recently commissioned by RTI International, under contract to USAID, to conduct learner testing of Grade 3 and Grade 6 learners, in a sample of their schools, over a three-year period. Baseline testing for the IEP was done in March 2005.

Learner testing is an important aspect of JET's aim to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Learner testing serves to assess the health of any education system and to benchmark change in the functionality of the system over time. In a project context, learner testing is ideally administered at three stages.

- At baseline stage: diagnostic testing provides clients and implementers with information regarding the level at which learners are performing prior to project intervention, which informs the type of interventions required.
- At mid-term testing stage: the same 'target audience' is able to obtain information regarding the impact of the intervention and is then able to make informed decisions aimed at improving the interventions (if necessary).
- At final testing stage: learner testing may establish the summational

## TESTING LEARNING: THE INTEGRATED EDUCATION PROGRAMME INITIATIVE



*By: Carla Pereira  
Project Manager  
JET Education Services*

impact of the project on learner performance, thus enabling participants to identify good practices for purposes of replication and sustainability.

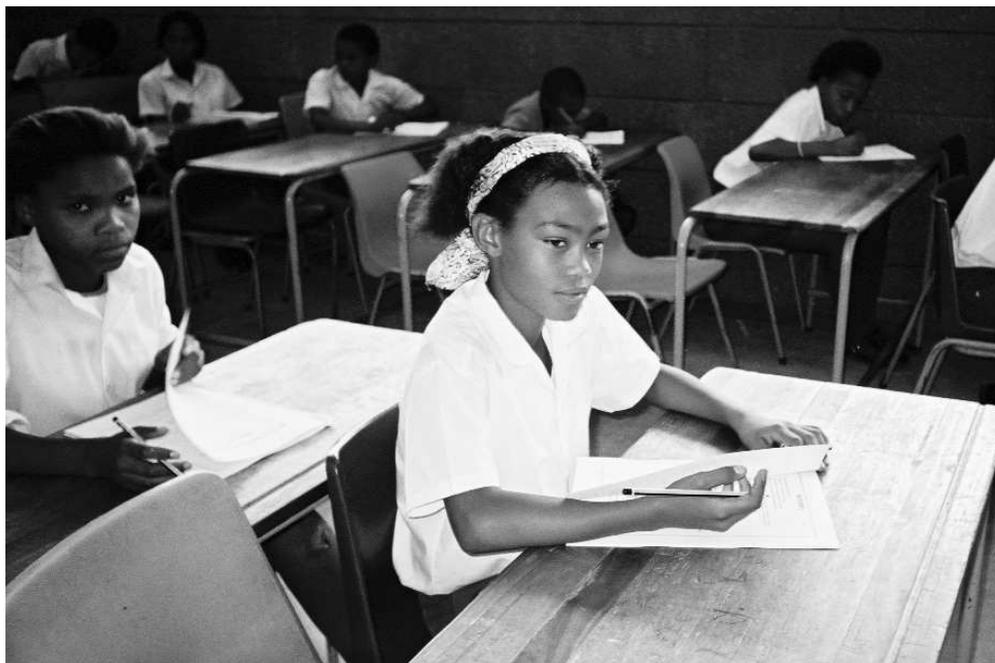
For the IEP, it was decided that the baseline study would test 10% of the 637 schools involved in the programme.

Project schools tested were drawn by means of a stratified random sample from the total of 637 programme schools. The stratification was based on the overall performance of the DDSP schools on a different test administered in 2000, 2002 and 2003, which guided the sample selection. The sample of schools was representative of the total project school population in terms of its cohort classification: poor performing, better performing, and first group of new primary schools.

57 Project schools were tested, which constitutes 8.7% of the IEP schools. The control schools were selected through purposive sampling methods where the main criterion was that schools should be non-IEP schools of the same socio-economic standing as IEP schools. Nine control schools were tested, constituting 1.3% of the total IEP schools.

The primary reasons for conducting the baseline testing and subsequent annual tests are to measure project progress in Literacy, Numeracy/ Mathematics and Science and to help the NGO training organisations and provincial Departments of Education to respond to the needs indicated by the testing. In addition, the national and provincial Departments of Education are informed on all findings.

Although the baseline was originally scheduled to take place in September/October 2004, this could not be done due to the call by the new Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, to align all privately administered learner tests to the National Department of Education (DoE) Systemic Evaluation tests. The baseline learner assessment was postponed to March 2005. The tests used in the DDSP



styles, school management systems, and learner characteristics. However, as no contextual or qualitative information was gathered for the baseline, it is difficult to make any conclusions with certainty.

These findings were presented by JET at the RTI Interprovincial meeting held at the Johannesburg International Airport in April 2005. At this presentation, a suggestion was made

that a more systematic evaluation of educators in the system be conducted. In this regard, RTI has asked JET to test a sample of teachers on the same content areas on which learners were assessed. This will determine the gaps (if any) in teachers' content knowledge. This component of the project is currently being planned and results will be presented in August 2005 at RTI's next Interprovincial meeting.



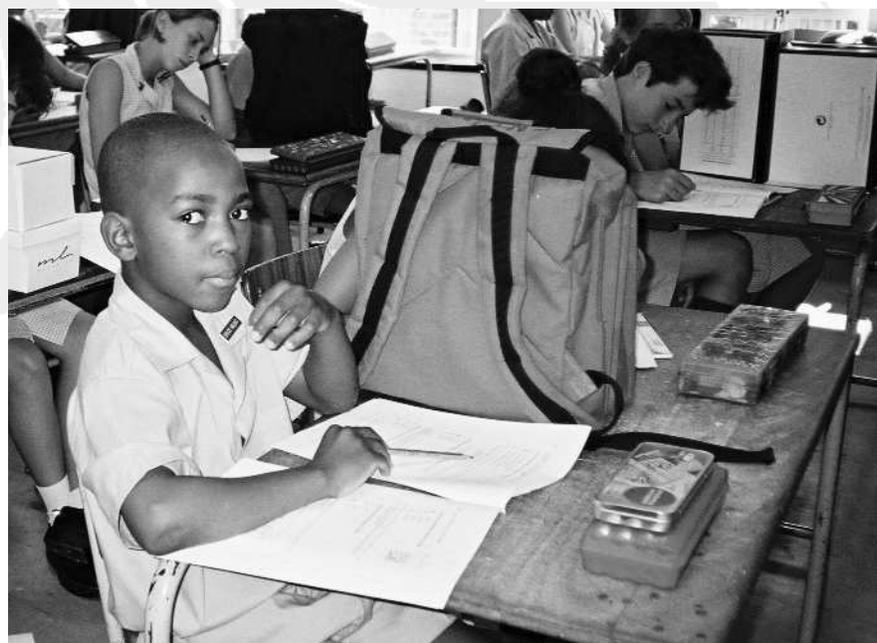
project were revised by JET, in consultation with the Systemic Evaluation Directorate of the National DoE. Between September 2004 and February 2005, they were piloted extensively in a range of schools that reflected the full spectrum of socio-economic and language conditions.

These revised Grade 3 Literacy and Numeracy tests and the Grade 6 Mathematics and Science tests were constructed using the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards as specified in the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS). These are pencil-and-paper tests designed to be completed by average learners in an hour and a half. They were administered to a group of 25 randomly sampled learners, in respective grades, in each of the sampled IEP and non-IEP control schools.

As a result of the delay in the testing programme, it was decided to test Grade 4 and Grade 7 learners, on the assumption that, at the start of the new school year, the knowledge of these learners is equivalent to that of Grade 3 and Grade 6 learners,

respectively, at the end of the previous school year. Subsequent testing will therefore compare the baseline results with those of Grade 3 and Grade 6 children at the end of the year.

The baseline results showed that most learners in Grade 4 and Grade 7 lack the literacy and numeracy skills appropriate to their level of learning. It is probable that performance levels may have been influenced by a number of extraneous variables. These could include characteristics of teachers, different teaching



**O**n 7th June the Gauteng Education Development Trust (GEDT) celebrated 10 years of education development in Gauteng, holding a dinner at the Sunnyside Park Hotel in Parktown in honour of the occasion.

The GEDT was formed in 1995, as the Gauteng Joint School Building Trust, by the Gauteng Department of Education, Transnet, the BHP Billiton Development Trust and Gauteng Educational Training Organisations Associations. The Trust is now also backed by the Absa Foundation, Transnet Foundation, Zenex Foundation and the Rand Water Foundation. Over the past 10 years the GEDT has managed the investment of over R300 million in the development of South Africa's education environment.

Since 1999, JET Education Services has provided administrative and accounting services to the GEDT, with full time staff attending to all the administrative and financial recording keeping for the Trust. The GEDT has no full time staff or fixed assets and JET provides all the necessary resources for its day-to-day functioning. This partnership

## **GAUTENG EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT TRUST CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF IMPROVEMENTS IN SCHOOLING**



*By: Robyn Klein-Christoffels  
Administrator  
JET Education Services*

has seen the implementation of stricter controls on the operations of the GEDT and the launch of a multi-year report to create awareness of the GEDT and its work.

The GEDT's original focus was building infrastructure. The bulk of the projects completed to date have been geared towards the construction of entire schools or classrooms and facilities such as science laboratories, halls, technology centres, ablution facilities. SMME contractors, owned by historically disadvantaged individuals, have been employed for most of the projects.

Beginning as a mechanism through which private sector funding could be channelled into education infrastructure development, the GEDT has since broadened its agenda to include other aspects of educational development such as teacher training, early childhood development, and supply of school technology.

The main objective of the GEDT is to facilitate private and public sector partnerships – aligning investments in education development to a common purpose in order to achieve greater rewards.



*Tom Waspe, Trustee, GEDT and Lulu Khumalo, Trustee representing BHP Billiton at the 10 year celebration dinner*



“These findings raise questions as to how well we are delivering on the needs of the most disadvantaged in the country.

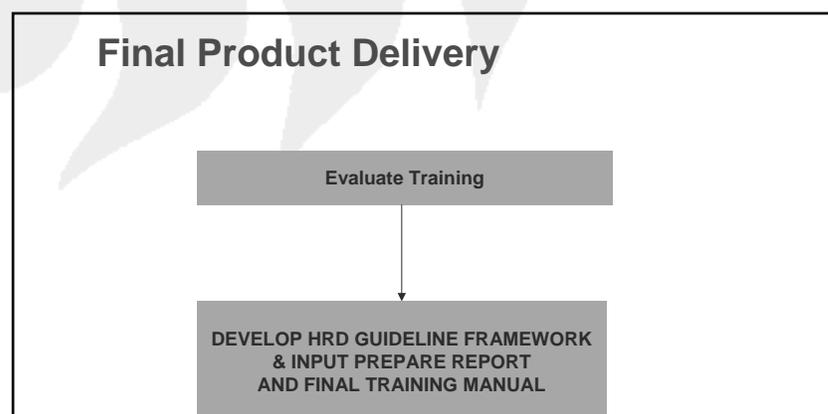
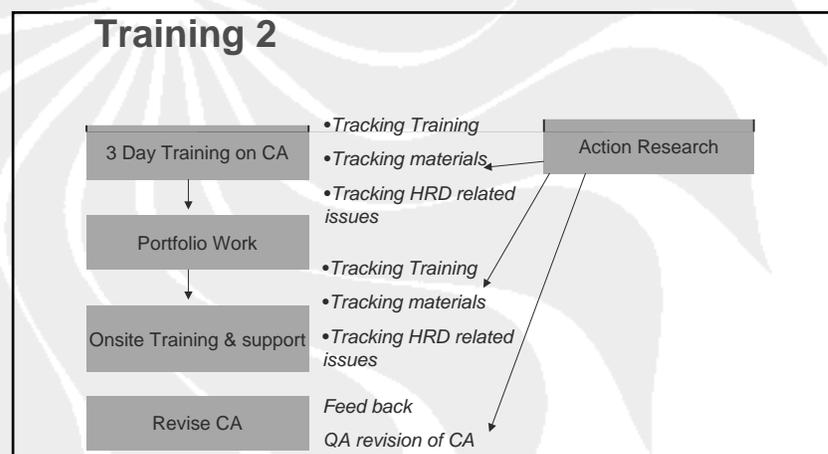
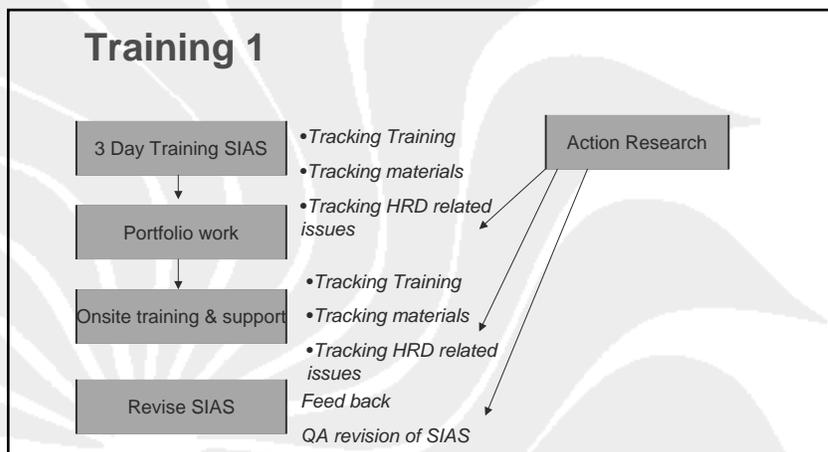
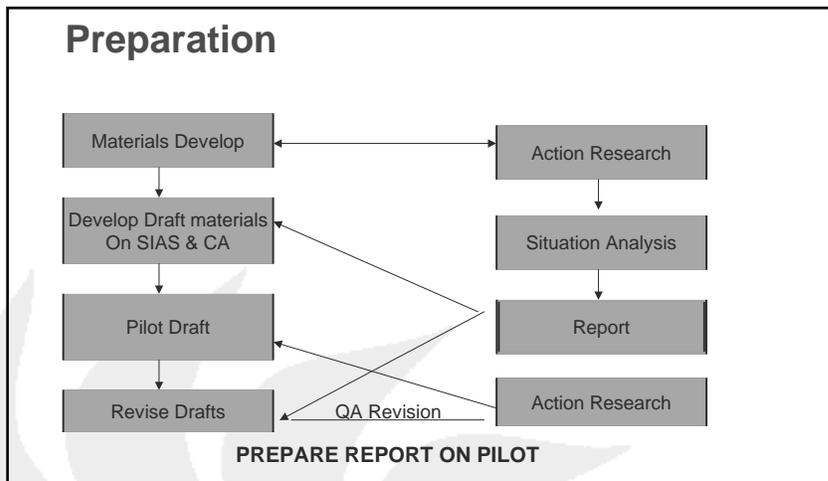
“As an emergent economy, with healthy enrolment rates and the majority of learners accessing education through the public schooling system, we must ensure that these basics are significantly improved for all, if we are to attain targets for the development of medium to high level skills in the country.

“Improved efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery that filters through to the level of the classroom-based practitioner is key, if our high ideals are to find practical application,” he says.

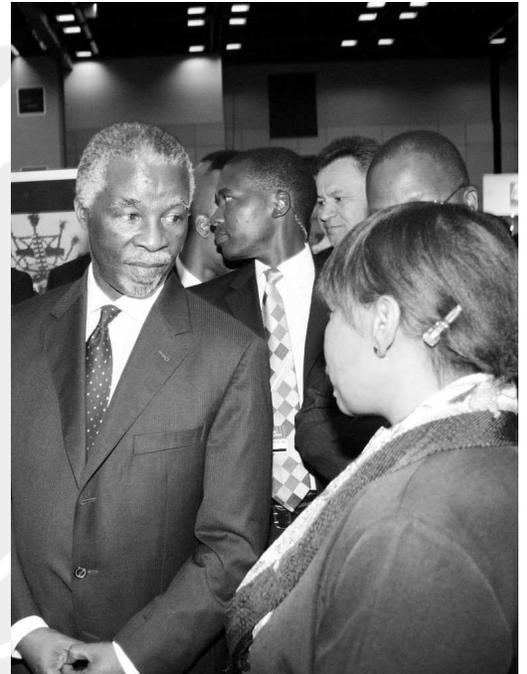
In the area of inclusive education, delivery will be underpinned by adequate screening, training, resources and curriculum adaptation. Our efforts to meet learners’ diverse needs should not mean, however, that learning outcomes are diluted. The acquisition of the basics is equally valid here, as elsewhere in the system, to promote meaningful educational reform.



## DELIVERY STRATEGY FOR SISONKE PROJECT



**MOMENTS  
WITH THE  
PRESIDENT:  
JET AT THE  
4th WORLD  
CHAMBERS OF  
COMMERCE  
CONGRESS -  
2005**



- More accreditation support should be provided to companies, particularly in respect of developing QMS.

By the end of the RPL Support Project in March 2005, 83 companies had been involved. Of these, 20 had completed RPL project plans for implementation in their respective workplaces.

Two of the companies that were most geared to conduct RPL assessments were SASOL and Dow Agro Sciences KZN. Others were in the process of

completing RPL project plans and, as a result of the RPL Support Project, will be able to continue the process on their own.

While the CHIETA has no immediate plans to follow up on what it initially saw as a pilot project, it fully recognises that there is still a great need for RPL amongst its member companies. The CHIETA has agreed to explore the learnings from this project and to see how additional resources can be secured to take it further.

However, CHIETA CEO, Dr Raymond Patel cautions that in future a more qualitative approach will be required if RPL is to be widely accepted: "Assessors, moderators and verifiers must understand not only the methodology of their professions but also the reasons for what they are doing. If they do not, assessment, moderation and verification become useless statistical pursuits."



In May JET, in partnership with Cambridge Education (CE), was awarded a tender to evaluate the support provided by the Royal Netherlands Embassy to the national Department of Education over the last three years. The work was undertaken by Nick Taylor of JET and Marcus Powell from CE, and was completed in the first week of June.

The NSBS programme is a first in the field of donor support to education in South Africa in that the funds were transferred directly to the Department instead of being administered by the donor or a fundholder, as is the case with all other donor aid. The evaluation concluded that this form of aid – known as budget support – was a resounding success. The main advantage of this modality is the sense of ownership and responsibility generated on the part of the recipient. As a result, the rate of spending has been higher than is often the case with programmes of support to the Department of Education (DoE). At the same time, the activities supported by the programme have been fully integrated into the normal business plan of the DoE. A measure of success of the

## Evaluation of the Netherlands Budget Support Programme (NSBS)



*By: Nick Taylor  
Chief Executive Officer  
JET Education Services*

budget support approach is that it is being adopted by other donors in providing aid to the DoE.

One weakness of the evaluation is that, given its restricted timeframe and the fact that it was commissioned after the completion of the programme, it was not able to assess the impact of the NSBS on the final beneficiaries of Dutch support in schools, colleges and classrooms. In order to gauge such impact, each project would need to have been accompanied by a more detailed evaluation conducted during the implementation stage.

The study concluded with the recommendation that such impact evaluations be commissioned as an integral part of at least the larger programme components, and certainly those aimed at exploring innovative solutions to complex problems, which would include a number of the projects which attracted NSBS support. Attaching independent evaluations to projects would optimise the lessons learned, and as a result maximise the impact of the donor funds.

