Beyond Primary Education:
Challenges and Approaches to Expanding Learning Opportunities in Africa

Parallel Session 5D

**Innovations
for Equitable Access**

Non-formal education and training opportunities
for youth living in the rural areas of South Africa

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**Working Document
DRAFT**

DOC 2.1.16

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ADEA	Association for the Education in Africa
ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative South Africa
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSD	Centre for Social Development
DOE	Department of Education
ECape	Eastern Cape
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FET	Further Education and Training
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
ISRDS	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy
JIPSA	Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition
KZN	KwaZulu Natal
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MIET	Media in Education Trust
NDA	National Development Agency
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non Profit Organisation
NYSP	National Youth Service Programme
NQF	National Qualification Framework
NCV	National Certificate (Vocational)
REFLECT	Regenerated Freirian Literacy Through Empowering Community Technique
SAAYC	South African Associaiton of Youth Clubs
SARN	South African Reflect Network
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SYR	Status of Youth Report
UYF	Umsobomvu Youth Fund
YAC	Youth Advisory Centre
YDN	Youth Development Network
YDT	Youth Development Trust

1. SUMMARY

1. This report focuses on youth living in rural areas of South Africa who are aged between 15 and 28 and who left school without a grade 12 certificate. It examines the non-formal and formal educational and training opportunities available to youth who live outside of the main urban areas and concludes that there are limited opportunities to access such programmes despite the national qualification framework which aims to redress the past inequalities caused by the apartheid government. The report also argues that programmes that focus only on skills development are unlikely to result in sustainable development of the individual and that a more holistic approach to development is required. The report concludes that lack of coherence in delivery of education and training programmes leading to qualifications aimed at youth living in rural areas as well as arduous bureaucratic demands has forced service providers to opt out of the qualification framework and to revert to small scale independent delivery.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Time has stood still for many people living in rural areas. There may be more houses with electricity and running water and schools might have more text books, but essentially day-to-day living has remained unchanged. The dramatic change in 1994 that heralded so much hope, has still to trickle into rural South Africa.

3. In combination with the political change there has been a major overhaul of the education system in South Africa. The need for an education system which provided a mechanism for learners to obtain recognised certification for qualifications acquired outside of the formal education system was first mooted during the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) which was completed in 1993. A national qualification framework (NQF) aimed at providing education and training that could redress past inequalities, that was more flexible, efficient and accessible began to be formalised at this time. Fifteen years later, it could be argued that the NQF has failed people living in rural areas. This paper explores this notion and attempts to answer the question of why people living in rural areas have continued to have problems accessing quality and relevant education, be it formal, non-formal or informal.

4. This paper was commissioned by the Association for the Education in Africa's (ADEA) Working Group on Non-Formal Education (WGNFE) and aims to contribute to the development of a better understanding of non-formal educational opportunities for youth living in the rural areas of South Africa.

5. The research had to meet a tight deadline and relied mainly on desk research. All quantitative data was acquired from secondary sources as was most of the qualitative and more detailed descriptions pertaining to youth groups.

6. The scenario presented in this paper suggests that there are over 12 million learners are enrolled annually in schools in South Africa. Over 700 000 annually leave school before completion and have a 25% chance of formal employment without further training. Foundational and social competencies are more likely to lead to entry level employment than technical or technological competence and less than 30% of youth know how to access information on job opportunities.

7. Although there are a number of policies and systems in place to deal with youth, many of these are weak at the point of delivery. In part this is due to the dilution of the needs and demands of youth living in rural areas across a number of government departments. Youth living in rural areas also lack access to information as local departments tend to be poorly resourced.

8. Although a national framework potentially provides an enabling infrastructure to access the youth, real access can only be acquired if there is a structure in place at the local level. This structure, even if it is only a single person, requires support and efficient and easy access to information pertaining to education and training opportunities available to the youth. Programmes focusing on the holistic development of a young person should specifically be encouraged. South Africa is currently experimenting, albeit in an uncoordinated manner, with various models of local support. These initiatives irrespective of whether they are driven by civil society or the state need to be supported and streamlined to provide services to the youth who live in the rural areas of South Africa.

3.   INTRODUCTION

> "*Each village has a large group of young people with a sense of having nowhere to go and nothing to do. Their presence preys on the minds of the youth still at school.*" HSRC (2005: 63)

9.   Time has stood still for many people living in rural areas. There may be more houses with electricity and running water and schools might have more text books, but essentially day-to-day living has remained unchanged. The dramatic change in 1994 that heralded so much hope, has still to trickle into rural South Africa. Most of the people living in rural areas will say the only thing that has changed is political will. Youth living in these rural areas aspire to the same things as their urban peers. They would also like to own the latest cell phone, wear hip clothing and arrange their social life via facebook. Well, maybe, it is certain that they are not as isolated as their parents were from the lure and glamour of urban life, but the chances of their joining it are as slim as it was for previous generations. Only a very small group of determined youngsters 'get out', the rest only dream.

10.   In combination with the political change there has been a major overhaul of the education system in South Africa. The need for an education system which provided a mechanism for learners to obtain recognised certification for qualifications acquired outside of the formal education system was first mooted during the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) which was completed in 1993. A national qualification framework (NQF) aimed at providing education and training that could redress past inequalities, that was more flexible, efficient and accessible began to be formalised at this time. Fifteen years later, it could be argued that the NQF has failed people living in rural areas. This paper explores this notion and attempts to answer the question of why people living in rural areas have continued to have problems accessing quality and relevant education, be it formal, non-formal or informal.

11.   This paper was commissioned by the Association for the Education in Africa's (ADEA) Working Group on Non-Formal Education (WGNFE) and aims to contribute to the development of a better understanding of non-formal educational opportunities for youth living in the rural areas of South Africa. It is hoped that by providing a more nuanced view of this complex situation it will be possible to develop better policies that meet the dreams of the youth and consequently contribute to the development of South Africa in general.

3.1.   Methodology

12.   The research had to meet a tight deadline and relied mainly on desk research. All quantitative data was acquired from secondary sources as was most of the qualitative and more detailed descriptions pertaining to youth groups. The researcher used local contacts as well as on events that occurred during the research period to widen the source of information beyond data available on the internet. Five university based people known to have expertise in rural, youth or development issues were interviewed. Representatives of provincial and national government departments, including the youth commission, arts and culture, social development, library services and education were contacted.

13.   Extensive use was made of the various data bases available on the Internet to obtain more detailed information on groups in civil society, academic institutions, private organisations and state departments that work with the youth. Any group that was found through this means and had an email address was emailed with a request for more information or the option of providing a phone number so that the researcher could phone them for an interview. For example, of thirty NGOs contacted in this way, five replied with telephone numbers, three answered by email and the remaining 24 requests remained unanswered. This result was not unexpected as many of the listings on the database were made in 2005 and it is likely that many no longer exist due to lack of funding.

3.2.   The South African Context

14.   This section of the paper will highlight some of the key characteristics of life in the rural areas of South Africa pertinent to this paper.

3.2.1.   The definition of 'rural'

15.   As in many countries, much of South Africa's rural space is sparsely populated and has an economy based mainly on agriculture[1]. About 45% of people who live in South Africa live in rural areas. Roughly 70% of South Africa's poor people live in these rural areas and about 70% of rural residents are poor[2]. The cost of living is high because people spend relatively more on their daily basic needs such as food, water, shelter, energy, health and education, vast distances increase the cost of transport. In addition poor infrastructure makes communication a burdensome task.

16.   In some of the high density rural areas of South Africa, one also finds many features of urban life. In addition many South Africans move between rural and urban areas in search of better living conditions and employment. The legacy of past policies made an impact on rural life in South Africa in unique ways. The former homeland system created resettled communities consisting of people from different backgrounds with most residents living in poverty and isolated from economic opportunities. In addition farm labourers who still live in former white rural areas, mainly on farms owned by white people, remain isolated from basic services. Around the mining towns in South Africa migrant workers continue to live in hostels with few facilities and other people, often family members, live around these areas with no facilities or jobs.

17.   Thus rural South Africa is a mix of: people who could be considered to be 'traditional rural' and have lived for a number of generations in the 'country'; people who work as labourers on farms; people who were resettled in 'homelands' prior to 1994 by the previous government and people who have moved to the outskirts of mining towns.

18.   Three of the nine provinces in South Africa, namely the Eastern Cape (E.Cape), Limpopo and KwaZulu Natal (KZN) consistently appear as the provinces with the highest levels of poverty. These areas account for 74% of children in South Africa aged 0 -18 years, have the highest levels of youth unemployment and adult illiteracy. As with other areas, HIV/ AIDS continue to ravage in the communities in these areas. In many ways these three provinces typify rural South Africa and have been selected in this paper for comparison with urban living conditions. The table below highlights the discrepancies, demonstrating to what extent people living in rural areas have to spend collecting water and wood for cooking and washing.

Table 3.1: Comparison of access to basic needs

Type	Total SA	Urban	Rural		KZN	Limpopo	E Cape
Piped water	82.2%	94.4%	62.0%		70.5%	76.9%	61.0%
Electricity for lighting	69.5%	80.8%	50.3%		61.2%	63.7%	49.5%
Electricity for cooking	50.7%	67.7%	21.8%		47.3%	24.7%	27.6%
Wood for cooking	20.3%	1.7%	51.3%		26.7%	59.3%	35.6%
Flush/chemical toilet	53.4%	77.5%	13.5%		46.5%	17.3%	34.6%

Source: Leibbrandt (2006: 115-126) Based on data from 2001 census.

3.2.2.   The definition of 'youth'

19.   In 1996 the National Youth Commission identified youth as being from 14-35 years of age. This was found to be an unwieldy category as the needs of youth change substantially during these two decades. In addition the age range overlapped and varied amongst the government departments which were responsible for delivery. While some organizations in South Africa continue to define people up until the age of 35 as youth, it was felt to be more useful for the purposes of this paper to concentrate on provision of education aimed at the 15-28 year olds.

20.   In this paper youth development is viewed holistically and is located within the context of broader community and national development. The Status of Youth Report (2003:19) suggested that there is a need

for holistic youth development and this included meeting the emotional, physical, creative, spiritual and socio-economic needs of youth. Ideally this holistic development would start in early childhood and continue throughout life. This paper supports these views. Another important aspect is the sustainability of an intervention. The ISRDS (2000) document suggested that this was most likely if the intervention was decentralised and included local participation in the planning and implementation.

21.   The focus of the paper remains to what extent youth living in the rural areas of South Africa can access education and training opportunities outside of the formal school system.

3.2.3.   The definition of formal and non formal education

Formal schooling

22.   Schooling is compulsory for all South African children aged seven to fifteen. During this time learners should complete grades one to nine which is the General Education and Training (GET) band. After completing grade 9, learners can exit the formal school system to seek employment or continue studying for three more years to obtain the National Senior Certificate which completes the Further Education and training band. Learners can remain at school or transfer to a Further Education and training (FET) College to obtain this certificate. Learners exiting from the FET band with appropriate credits can proceed to Higher Education. The following table provides a picture of the education system in South Africa.

Table 3.2: South African Education System

Band	School Grade or Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) level	Compulsory (Yes /No)	NQF level
Early Childhood Development	0 years – 5 yrs Reception year (Grade R)	No No*	_ _
General Education and Training	Grades 1 – 8 Grade 9 or ABET level 4	Yes Yes	_ Level 1
Further Education and Training	Grade 10 Grade 11 Grade 12 or ABET level 5	No No No	Level 2 Level 3 Level 4
Higher Education and Training	Certificate, Diploma, Degree, Honors, Masters, Doctorate	No	Levels 5 – 8

* Aim to make this year compulsory by 2014.

23.   There were 34 162 established public and registered independent educational institutions in South Africa in 2005. The breakdown of the 34 162 institutions and 13 936 737 learners was:

Table 3.3 : Public and Registered Educational Institutions in SA in 2005

Total Institutions	Type of institution	Number educators	Number learners	% of participation
26 592 ordinary schools	19 260 Primary schools	228 957	7 681 324	87.7%
	5 851 Secondary school	123 947	3 828 705	
	1 481 Combined schools[3]	29229	707 736	
7 570 other institutions	2 278 ABET centres	17 181	269 140	1.9%
	404 Special needs schools	7 294	87 865	0.6%
	4 815 ECD sites	9 000	246 911	1.8%
	50 Public FET colleges	6 407	377 584	2.7%
	23 Public Higher Ed. Inst.	15 315	737 472	5.3%
34 162	34 162 Institutions	437 330	13 936 737	100.0%

DOE (2006:3,19)

24.   Most significant for this paper is the low level of participation by learners in ABET Centres (1.9%) and FET Colleges (2.7%) in contrast to the public schools which accounts for 85.4% of the participation rate. In the above table the independent schools have been included and account for the additional 2.3%. The following section explores the extent to which youth have dropped out of school before completion.

Out of School Youth

25.   According to the DOE (2006:52) report approximately 50% of people between the ages 16 and 18 who were out of school reported that they wished to continue attending school. Lack of finance was the most

common reason (42%) for dropping out of school with other reasons being: school is uninteresting (12%), pregnancy (7%), illness (6%) and family commitments (6%). Hidden in the statistics of school drop-out is the factor of HIV/AIDS. The lack of financial resources given as a reason to drop out might in many cases mean that the respondent has become the head of the household and has to support younger siblings. Current estimates of 5, 5 million people living with HIV/AIDS earn South Africa the ignominious title of country with the highest percentage (11%) of HIV/Aids infected people. It was estimated that in 2006 each day there were almost 1000 deaths from AIDS related illnesses and 1400 new infections[4]. The highest rate of new infections is amongst women in the 15 – 24 age group.

Non-Formal Education (NFE)

26.   The term Non-Formal Education, although popular in South Africa in the 70s and 80s, is hardly used any more. Although the concept of non-formal education (NFE) still exists, the NFE programmes have adopted new labels that are more aligned to the jargon of outcome based education. Programmes are more likely to include 'lifeskills', 'development' or 'self-help' in their title. For example prior to 1994 programmes offered by the state and NGOs teaching basic reading and writing to adults were called literacy classes. These are now called Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) classes. ABET programmes follow a standardised curriculum, have standardised outcomes and the learners are formally assessed by an external examining body to see to what extent the outcomes have been met. The ABET programmes articulate with the NQF and successful learners can re-enter the formal education system.

27.   This paper considers NFE to be any programme which offer learning opportunities to youth outside of the formal schooling system. Thus the discussions in section five include programmes that are accredited by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) and provide articulation and access opportunities for graduates to re-enter formal education at a further or higher education level. The discussion will also include information on programmes that are not accredited by SAQA and are cannot be given an NQF equivalent level. Graduates from these programmes can not use this qualification to gain access to accredited programmes that are at a higher level than they were at, when they left school. These programmes exist to meet specific needs of learners and providers that were not being met by the SAQA aligned programmes.

28.   The following section provides a brief picture of the needs and demands as well as the interests of the youth living in South Africa. Where possible, information on rural youth has been disaggregated from the overall youth population.

4. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE YOUTH OF SOUTH AFRICA?

29. This section examines in some detail the data available on youth, particularly those living in rural areas of South Africa.

4.1. Poverty

30. According to the 2001 census there were slightly less that 45 million people living in South Africa of whom sixteen and a half million were between the ages of 15 and 34. In 2005, Emmet (2005:140) estimated that 42% of eighteen to twenty-four year olds and 33% of twenty-five to thirty-five year olds lived in rural areas in South Africa. The decrease in the older age group was due to migration to urban areas. The same study assessed the level of poverty in the same two age groups. The study found that most of the poorest youth were between 18 and 24 and lived in rural areas of South Africa. The following table summarizes their findings which placed more than half of youth living in rural areas as at least moderately poor[5].

Table 4.1: Comparison of poverty level, age and by urban/rural

Level of Poverty	18-24 year old		25-35 year old	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Ultra poor	10%	35%	6%	28%
Moderately poor	15%	28%	12%	24%

Source: Emmet (2005:142)

4.2. Employment

31. According to Bhorat and Oosthuizen, in 2002, the bulk of the labor force in South Africa lived in urban areas, with less than 38% living in rural areas. The share of youth in the labor force was slightly more than half as shown in the following table. The last column indicates the spread of unemployment in terms of age with the highest level of unemployment in the 15-24 age group; this is to be expected as they have had the least time to acquire employment.

Table 4.2: Comparison of Labour force by age in 2002

Age	Number	% share employed	% never employed or unemployed for last 3 years
15-24 yrs	3 704 000	19.6%	86%
25-34 yrs	6 523 000	34.5%	77%
> 34 yrs	8 699 000	45.9%	73%*
Total	18 912 000	100.0%	79%

*Source: Bhorat & Oosthuizen (2006:146, 178) * own calculation*

32. The following table indicates the level of employment by three provinces and the national average. The table is not exclusive for youth, but shows the discrepancy between urban and rural areas. The table indicates that virtually half of the people living in rural areas are unemployed.

Table 4.3: Comparison of unemployment rates in 2002 by selected provinces

Province	Urban	Rural	Total
KwaZulu Natal	37.8%	52.1%	44.1%
E. Cape	42.3%	51.5%	47.4%
Limpopo	34.1%	60.6%	56.5%
National Average	37.1%	49.6%	41.8%

Source: Bhorat & Oosthuizen (2006:188)

33. By combining the information in the above two tables one can extrapolate that youth living in the selected rural areas have at average a 50% chance (rural average) of being employed and a 20% (youth average) chance of obtaining work. There is also evidence that unless one gets employed within the first three years of trying, one has an almost 80% chance of remaining unemployed. The chance of obtaining employment decreases if one has not completed secondary school (50% chance compared to 34% chance for

those who complete secondary school.)[6] Kraak (2004:30) suggested that in 2004, 29% of african and 75% of white new entrants would get jobs.

34.   A case study on the employability of Further education and Training (FET) College graduates conducted by Jeanne Gamble in 2006 for the HSRC looked at four areas of competence to determine to what extent each of these areas were viewed by employers as important and thus contributed to making the graduates employable . The 128 employers who participated in the HSRC case study came from a wide range of sectors including engineering, hospitality and business. The questions provided information about the roles of foundational, technological, social and technical competence in determining employability. The following table clarifies the fours areas as well the questions that were asked of employers.

Table 4.4: Areas of competence compared in HSRC employability case study

Components of employability	Category
1. Able to speak the following languages: 1.1 English 1.2 Afrikaans 1.3 African language of the region 2. Ability to work with written text in English (reading and writing) 3. Ability to work with numbers and figures	Foundational competence
4. Computer skills (e.g. Word, Excel, email, internet) 5. Ability to use basic technology in the workplace (e.g. fax, photo-copier, work tools)	Technological competence
6. Ability to get on with others and work in a team 7. Ability to help clients in a knowledgeable and courteous manner	Social competence
8. Ability to think independently and use own initiative to solve problems 9. An understanding of a technical area and the ability to talk about the way things work (e.g. in engineering, business studies, hospitality, early childhood development) 10. Practical expertise in a technical area (e.g. in engineering, business studies, hospitality, early childhood development)	Technical and problem solving competence

Source: Gamble (2006:17)

35.   The HSRC case study found that social competence was considered to be the most important of all, with *being able to help clients in a knowledgeable and courteous manner* (item 7) scoring the highest rating, followed closely by *ability to work with others and work in a team* (item 6). Foundational competence was rated as second in importance followed by technical competence. Gamble (2006:27) argued in her conclusion:

> *At the intermediate labour market level South African employers tend to use a notion of **trainability rather than employability.** High value is placed on social and foundational competence as these are competences for which employers cannot train. Employers feel better equipped to provide training in technological and technical areas so they tend to rate these competences lower.*

This finding is particularly significant for education and training programmes that are narrowly focused on skill development.

4.2.1.   Training demands of youth

36.   Research conducted for Umsobomvu Youth Fund (2000:20) by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) asked 2 500 youth from across South Africa about the areas in which they would like to receive training. The most popular national response at 12% was 'practical or information skills', the next most popular at 11% 'was anything to get a job'. Less popular were arts and craft skills (3%), entrepreneurship (3%), farming (2%) and sports management (1%) However youth in rural areas favoured practically orientated training over information technology. As this study was completed close to ten years ago, this difference will probably have changed as youth, even in rural areas, have had greater access to information technology. Respondents were also asked whether they knew of or used any government and community services aimed at enhancing their chances of getting a job[7]. Less than 30% of respondents

indicated knowing of or using such services. CASE argued that this reflected the scarcity and limited promotion of such services rather than ignorance on the part of youth.

37.   There is often an assumption made that improving agricultural skills will benefit those living in rural areas. Adults interviewed in community indabas[8] held as part of the 'Emerging Voices' survey stated that they were interested in agricultural and community development; learners however said that they wanted a "*meaningful education that was equal to the best and would enhance their capabilities as human beings*" (Emerging Voices 2005:102). This reflected their interest in self development rather than the development of the community. This finding supports the UYF survey, mentioned above, that found that youth were not interested in attending agricultural training programmes.

4.3.   Participation in Civil Society

38.   UYF (2000:47) found that 54% of youth in their survey did not belong to any kind of organisation. The most popular organisation for membership in rural areas was a church (18%) with 16% belonging to sports clubs as the next popular. Only 6% of rural youth belong to a youth organisation, 5% to a political organisation and 1% belong to student organizations, a women's group or a cultural group. In terms of recreational activities, 20% of youth reported participating in a community sports team more than once a month while 29% reported supporting a sports team at least as often. The next most common regular activity was participation in a dance or music group (16.5%) or a community society or club (14%)[9]. In contrast 48% reported watching the news on television almost daily and 27% reported reading a newspaper as often.

39.   The Labor Force Survey (LFS) of 2005 assessed the extent of voluntarism in South Africa and found that just over 1 million people between the ages of 15-65 were involved in voluntary or uncompensated work. The most common type of volunteering was to collect money for an organization with caring for the sick or disabled the second most common. Slightly more than half (56%) of this group were female and 52% indicated that they also had paid employment. More than half (58%) of all volunteers were over the age of 35 years. The low participation rate of youth in volunteer work is being addressed through a youth service programme.

40.   In summary:

- Over 12 million learners are enrolled annually in schools in South Africa[10]
- Over 700 000 annually leave school before completion and have a 25% chance of formal employment without further training
- The most common entry level employment is in wholesale and retail or the service industry
- Acquiring technical skills is the most popular choice of training of youth
- Foundational and social competencies are more likely to lead to entry level employment than technical or technological competence.
- Less than 30% of youth know how to access information on job opportunities
- The youth are less interested in civic or community issues than their parents
- Less than half of the youth belong to any organisation, but the most common is a church at 18% followed by a sports association at 16%.
- Volunteering is not a popular choice

5. STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE YOUTH

41.   The youth were not engaged in the pre-1994 negotiations to the same extent as other interest groups, thus youth related issues do not feature as prominently in the constitution. In addition youth concerns stretch across many interest groups and government departments and are not as easily confined to one interest area. As this paper is concerned with NFE and development of rural youth, its interests cuts across an even broader number of structures initiated by government and civil society. The following sections identify some of the key structures and discusses to what extent these structures are meeting the needs of the youth living in the rural areas of South Africa.

5.1.   State policies aimed at supporting youth

42.   The National Youth Commission (NYC) was established in 1996 by the national government to develop policy for youth as well as to play a role in advocacy and lobbying. According to Moleke (2006:20) the main challenges facing NYC were the lack of human and financial resources and collaboration with some departments, including the Department of Education (DOE). This obviously impacts significantly on the ability of NYC to meet the needs of the youth. The National Youth Development Framework 2002-2007 was developed in collaboration with other bodies by the NYC and adopted by the government in 2002. The framework aimed to mainstream youth development as integral to the broader transformation project. Six categories of youth were targeted in the document, 'youth based in rural areas' being one of them.

43.   The Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF) was established in 2001 to implement policies, specifically to facilitate and promote the creation of jobs and skill development among the unemployed and out of school youth in SA. UYF has three areas of delivery:

- Contact, information and counselling
- Skills development and transfer thought on the job experience
- Entrepreneurial support and finance

44.   Recent documentation produced by UYF identify 'rural youth' as a category, but there is very little evidence of their efforts in this area. According to their website they have 113 Youth Advisory Centres (YAC) country wide and four mobile units for 'hard to reach areas'. The revamped website indicates that they are attempting to make themselves more accessible via the YACs as all these centres have internet access and many are located in FET colleges in rural areas. However the current main focus of activity of the UYF remains unemployed graduates which makes their focus beyond the reach of the youth who are the targets of this paper. One of their programmes which is relevant, is the school-to-work programme which is focused on bridging the gap between education and work. The UYF (2007) has initiated a total of 53 school-to-work projects, eleven are for graduates, 19 for scholars and 23 based at FET colleges. The majority of these last mentioned projects are learnerships aimed at youth who have not completed their schooling. Learnerships are explained in some detail in a later section of this paper.

45.   The implementation plan of the National Youth Service Programme (NYSP) was approved by the government in 2001 and has the primary role of promoting the involvement of young people in activities which provide benefits to the community whilst developing the abilities of young people through service and learning. The programmes are aimed at unemployed young people. NYSP works with the departments of Social and Community Development, Health, Infrastructure, Nature Conservation and Education. Typically the programmes last 12-18 months, include training and should lead to an employment opportunity on completion.

46.   One of the key state departments is the department of social development, who according to their Annual Report 2005/2006:26, spent just under R21million of their R55 586 billion on family, child and youth development. Although they spent R3 million less than the allocated budget, the same report states that they were unable to achieve the objective of piloting two youth centres in each province due to lack of funds. These centres were aimed at providing a skills development programme for vulnerable youth who were described as those who were out of school and unemployed. The department did however complete a draft of

a *Youth Development Strategy Framework* which was aimed at ensuring integration and mobilisation of resources. No further details were provided in this annual report other than that it was due to be approved during 2007.

5.1.1. Critique of State policies aimed at supporting youth

47.   The above discussion mentions five different initiatives that have been introduced since 1994 to address the needs of the youth One of the main barriers to obtaining a focus on youth is that it is not a clearly defined category and concerns many different state departments. These departments often work in isolation or silos which results in uncoordinated and duplicated initiatives. While government departments appear to be making some effort to include the youth, the lack of focus on youth as a category and particularly youth living in rural areas becomes more obvious on closer analysis.

48.   In a paper prepared by Buso et al (2004) for the Free State Youth Commission which analyzed to what extent the Provincial Government had designated resources to focus on youth issues in the Free State. They interviewed thirteen departments and found:

- 54% (7) had Special Programme Officers who were responsible for 'Youth, Gender, Disability and HIV/AIDS'.
- 54% (7) had implemented capacity building schemes aimed at youth. These included bursaries, internships and opportunities to volunteer.
- 38% (5) had a youth unit
- 31% (4) had a budget to spend on youth
- 23% (3) could give information on jobs that had been created especially for the youth

49.   The main finding of the Free State Youth Commission research was that there was very little co-ordination between departments and the only opportunity for departments to discuss youth issues with each other was at interdepartmental forum meetings. When activities were arranged co-operatively they tended to be on increasing awareness on issues such as reducing water wastage. A major set back to encouraging joint programmes was that there was no mechanism in place for projects to be funded jointly by different departments.

50.   Other surveys prove that also on a national level departments are working in isolation. For example, although the Department of Education (DOE) annual report 2005-2006 listed some strategies aimed at streamlining information and support services between the NYC, UYF and DOE, indicating that there was the start of a working relationship, the youth development portfolio still returns 'no records' on the DOE website.

51.   While it would seem that the need to focus on youth is being recognized it is obvious that getting funding to support political will is still problematic. This research highlights the difficult task of directing the state's attention to the special needs of the youth as a starting point with the needs of rural youth being a specific component within this group.

5.2.   Civil Society and youth

52.   The South African Youth Council was established in 1997 as a national, non-government organisation of youth organizations aimed at contributing to policy and youth programme development. Their website indicates that they had a wide membership with the largest grouping being students (48%). Other organizations were groups having political affiliations (21%), youth clubs (5%) and economic groupings(5%). Interestingly the category 'rural' was listed as making up 0% of members indicating the lack of access to this kind of network of youth living in rural areas of South Africa. A concern was that nothing on the website was more recent than 2005 and emails to their address were returned as unknown.

53.   The Youth Development Network (YDN) is a national network of six youth development organisations operating in South Africa. According to their website, the YDN was established in 1998 to

explore ways of increasing the impact of youth development programmes, sharing information and best practices amongst the member organisations, securing resources to support youth development programmes and advocating for the interests of young people. A priority for the YDN is to put youth and youth issues on the national agenda. The YDN member organisations run skills training, youth entrepreneurship and community development programmes to this effect.

54.   The Youth Development Trust is a non-governmental organisation aimed at developing and building strategic alliances in the youth sector. It was founded in 1987 in order attract international funding and distribute this money to local development organisations. A search on their website using the keyword 'rural' yielded a nil return.

5.2.1.   Critique of Civil Society and youth

55.   A search through the three organizations listed above revealed, not surprisingly, a focus on youth related issues. However they appear to work within their own, rather limited network base and their national impact is thus limited. None of the three organizations appear to have got to grips with the needs or interests of rural youth.

6. STRATEGIES AIMED AT YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

56.   This section provides information on various training and education programmes for youth that have been initiated by the state and civil society and are supported by the local private sector and/ or international donors. The section focuses initially on programmes that are aligned to the NQF and give successful learners the opportunity to access more advanced programmes. The most important programmes in this category are the learnership scheme and the new national certificate (vocational). The second half of this section considers programmes from civil society, including those programmes that for various reasons provide programmes that are not NQF aligned.

6.1.   Programmes initiated by the State

57.   In this section three types programmes are reviewed: those programmes aimed at skill development, those aimed specifically at self-employment and those aimed at the holistic development of the youth.

6.1.1.   State initiated skill development programmes that youth can   attend

58.   The Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA) is the implementation strategy for reducing poverty in South Africa by half, by 2014 by incorporating the so-called second economy into the first economy[11]. The strategy is based on a steady increase in the general economy and job-creating capacity. An indication of ASGISA occurred in February 2007at the state of the nation address when the President of South Africa committed the country, amongst others to the following:

- Engage at least 20 000 more young people in the National Youth Service on top of the   10 000 already involved
- Enrol 30 000 young volunteers in community development initiatives
- Employ 5 000 young people as part of Expanded Public Works Programme
- Intensify efforts to integrate youth development into the mainstream of government work, including a youth co-operative programme.

59.   The extent to which youth have actually participated in these opportunities will only be available during 2008. These initiatives developed policies that have been in operation since 1998. For example the Skills Development Act (1998) aimed at enhancing skill levels of workers according to labor market needs. The Skills Development Levies Act (1999) which legislated that employers contribute a percentage of their wage bill to the national skills fund. This is the funding mechanism for the Skills Education Training Authorities (SETAs). There are currently 23 SETAs representing the different sectors in the South African economy. The National Skills Development Strategy (2001) initiated by the department of labor included targeting unemployed youth with programmes such as learnerships and vocational education.

60.   A learnership is a work-based learning programme that leads to a nationally recognised qualification that is directly related to an occupation and is a combination of theory and practice in the workplace.

- Applicants must be between the ages of 16 and 35 and
- unemployed or just leaving school or college having completed some formal education.
- There are no costs for the learners and they receive a stipend from their employer while completing the practical part of the training.

61.   Learnerships registered at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level 4 are the equivalent of grade 12. Applicants are required to register at the department of labour and to pick from a choice of fifteen areas of interest. The department undertakes to contact them if a learnership that seems appropriate becomes available. In July 2007, 1023 learnership programmes had been registered the twenty three SETAs. The learnership levels ranged from level 1 (the end of general education which is equal to grade 9) to level 8 which is on a post graduate level. The researcher went to the department of labor website to see what learnerships might be available for youth who had not completed formal schooling. It is significant that only 49 of all of the1023 registered were at level 1 which is less than 5% of the learnerships.

62.   The Department of Labour commissioned the HSRC to conduct the first comprehensive survey on the learnership programmes. The HSRC has established a database of over 320 000 names of people who have entered a learnership and are currently tracing a sample of 8000. The results of this research will be available from the Department of Labour from March 2008[12]. The research will include data on the path followed by participants, including their employment status at the time of the research.

63.   The most detailed information currently available is on the school-to-work programme of the UYF. In the UYF June 2007 report they list twenty three learnership programmes that enrolled a total of 1200 youth participants at FET Colleges across South Africa. The majority of the learnerships (15 of 23) were at level 2 which is the equivalent level of grade 10 in South Africa and the most common field of study was engineering. However, it was not possible to assess the extent of participation by rural youth.

64.   Expanded Public Works programmes were launched in 2003 and aimed to provide at least one million additional jobs in the following five years, 30% of these positions being designated for youth. The positions were mainly in road maintenance and the construction industry. In April 2007 this was expanded to include 1500 volunteers recruited via the national youth service scheme. The volunteers were recruited to participate in a Home Community Based Care Support programme which is a level 3 NQF programme.

65.   Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) is provided by the state at Community Learning Centres. ABET courses start with basic mother tongue literacy and numeracy and culminates in an ABET level 5 certificate which is the equivalent of a senior school leaving certificate. This certificate allows graduates to access higher education programmes. Supervisors of these centres report increasing attendance by 'out of school youth', but data on youth, particularly rural youth attendance is not tracked. In 2008 a new mass literacy campaign is being planned in South Africa. It is believed that this campaign will included in its target population 'out of school youth'.

66.   The Department of Education introduced the vocational arm of a school leaving certificate in January 2007. The National Certificate (Vocational) is an alternative to the academic programme offered at high schools. Both the academic and vocational further education programmes last three years and result in a school leaving certificate that can lead to higher education. The new qualification is offered at FET Colleges which traditionally have attracted learners not suited to more academic courses. Learners at these colleges span a larger age range than those in high schools which makes them ideally suited to accommodating the needs of youth requiring a second chance to complete their schooling. (Vinjevold 2006)

67.   The National Certificate (vocational) NCV is designed to combine theory and practical experience in one of eleven vocational fields. The fields are all high in demand and are clustered into: tourism, finance, electrical, infrastructure and construction. The practical component may be offered in a real or simulated workplace. At each level students are required to do a language, mathematics or mathematical literacy, life orientation and four vocational subjects.

68.   Life orientation as a compulsory subject for all learners following the formal education route and its inclusion in the NCV reflects a growing concern to prepare learners for the world of work in a more holistic way. Life orientation in NCV includes general life skills as well as computer literacy. Learners completing this programme will acquire foundational, technical, technological and social competencies. In terms of the findings of Gamble (2006) discussed earlier, this programme should enable learners to find employment.

69.   According to Vinjevold, 25 059 learners (89.7% of the target) were enrolled in January 2007 into the first year (NQF level 2) of the new vocational certificate[13]. There are 50 Further Education and Training (FET) colleges in South Africa, each with a number of campuses with many of the campuses in rural areas. All colleges met at least 70% of the enrolment target. The target for NQF level 2 for 2008 is 40 000. The percentage breakdown of the national learner numbers registered in March 2007 was as follows:

Table 6.1: Spread of participation in the new NC(v) programme at FET Colleges

Name of Programme	% Participation
Civil engineering and Building construction	9.7%
Electrical Infrastructure construction	19.7%
Engineering Related Design	20.9%
Finance, Economics and Accounting	7.9%

Hospitality	4.2%
Information Technology and Computer Science	8.1%
Management	5.0%
Marketing	3.8%
Office Administration	15.4%
Primary Agriculture	1.7%
Tourism	7.9%
Total	100.0%

Source: Vinjevold, Personal communication, 17 August 2007

70.   The lowest enrolment level shown in the above table is for the primary agricultural field at 1.7%. This reflects the lack of interest in young people pursuing farming as a career. Just over 50% of the learners enrolled in one of the three engineering programmes and 32% enrolled in one of the four business studies programmes. This follows the pattern of enrolment of the national technical programmes (NATED) offered by the FET Colleges.

71.   The department has set aside R600 million over three years for bursaries specifically aimed at the 16-22 year age group. The funding will be allocated according to where learners are situated. This should assist the poorer learners in obtaining access to the programme as bursaries include fees, transport, textbook costs and living expenses. Research currently being conducted at some of the FET Colleges is showing that the funding might have attracted unsuitable learners to this first year of the programme. Educators reported to the writer of this report that attendance for many of the programmes was poor and that learners appeared to have been attracted to the new programmes thinking they would have an 'easy ride', but had found the programmes too demanding. For example, an engineering programme visited in a college in the Western Cape, had started in January as a group of 100 learners. By October there were only 30 learners still attending fairly regularly and the lecturer estimated that only three were likely to pass as the others lacked analytical ability. Lecturers at this college planned to introduce some form of aptitude test for the 2008 intake to avoid this problem.

6.1.2.   State initiated programmes aimed at developing entrepreneurs

72.   The Umsobomvu Youth fund (UYF) is the main state provider of funds aimed at developing youth entrepreneurs. There are four levels of funding. Although there are targets based on race14, there is no evidence of any 'rural' or 'out of school youth' targets. The UYF funds use the expanded category of youth which has the cut-off of 35 years of age. With the exception of the first level, UYF Micro Finance, these funding mechanisms offer substantial amounts of money and aimed more at the mid-career entrepreneur who already has a business, but requires funding to expand his/her operation. The UYF micro finance is the only programme that includes co-operative training as part of its operation. The UYF financially has also supported learners completing New Venture Creation programmes at FET colleges. This programme is specifically at developing entrepreneurs. Although it has not been possible to find evidence of it, it is feasible that youth living in rural areas have benefited from this funding.

73.   The findings of the Morrow (2005:10) indicated that self-employment had limited success as only 6% of youth were self employed and 51% of this group stated they were only self-employed because they could not find formal employment. The report found that a lack of credit history and experience were the main factors mitigating against youth succeeding as entrepreneurs. Youth also reported that although they received training to assist them in starting a business, there were no mechanisms that provided on going support once they had started a business. It would appear that the four programmes of UYF, which do not appear to offer on going support, reflect the findings of Morrow.

74.   New developments include a broadening of support of the New Venture Creation programme. The co-operative skills training programme is also currently being revised. The new version will allow more time for the support of trainees. Finally, the National Certificate (Vocational) programme, discussed above, includes entrepreneurship as one of its vocational subjects. The value of these innovations and developments to the youth who live in rural areas is still unclear as there has been very little monitoring and evaluation and none regarding rural youth participation.

6.1.3. State programmes involved in more than skill development

75.   Two state departments that are not obvious inclusions in this report are the departments of sport and recreation and arts and culture. The departments have been included as they indicate alternative strategies for mobilizing youth.

Sport and Recreation Department

76.   Sports and Recreation South Africa is responsible for policy, provision and facilitation of sport and recreation delivery in the country. The key objectives of this department include using sport to reduce crime. Life Orientation is now a compulsory school subject and sport is one of the components of the subject. Thus the main efforts of the department are to re-establish sport at a school level.

 Department of Arts and Culture

77.   The National Arts Council (NAC) has a primary role of disbursing public funds to the arts and culture community. In the financial year the NAC 2006/7 spent 30% of available funds on projects in communities identified as problematic 'nodes' by the ISDRS. They reported that 1 612 new jobs were created and that 100 learners were enrolled in learnership programmes. Women (68%) were the main beneficiaries of these initiatives, but no mention was made of the proportion of youth. The new council, appointed in 2006, committed itself to improving delivery and streamlining funding in order to make funding easier to obtain and more equitable. However the process described on the website is still fairly onerous and according to the NAC 2007 newsletter only 123 individuals and organizations were successful in their grant applications.

78.   The National Arts festival in Grahamstown provides an annual opportunity for rural groups, mainly from the Eastern Cape to perform to audiences. Rhodes University runs an outreach programme that sources groups all over the province and prepares them for performing as part of the Fringe festival. Throughout the year groups attend workshops and are brought to Grahamstown to compete for a place. The NAC supports these performers as well as providing a developmental platform for groups not good enough to perform as part of the festival.

6.2.   Programmes initiated by Civil Society

79.   South Africa has a long proud history of the involvement of social movements and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working for change. Prior to 1994 many of these groups focused their efforts on achieving political change. Today the focus has shifted and many groups now work to redress the imbalances caused by the previous apartheid government.

80.   Informal interviews with a variety of NGOs working with youth stated that in many cases they had to offer NQF aligned programmes, if they wanted to obtain any financial support from the state. If they wanted to offer new programmes then they had to be reworked to match already registered unit standards or had to follow the lengthy programme of getting their programmes accredited. Many had initially followed the accreditation route, but had found it too onerous and had either reduced their programme load or sought other means of support. In the light of these findings, the discussion in this section will include programmes that have opted out of state funding that required accreditation or the need to be linked to learnerships.

81.   As mentioned in the methodology section, this paper is based mainly on desk top research and in order to trace independent organisations the researcher relied extensively on internet searches. The examples listed here are obviously not exhaustive, but were selected, partly because information was readily available and secondly because they give an idea of the range of the kinds of organizations currently operating in South Africa. Inevitably there are organisations which were not listed on easily accessible databases or did not have the infrastructure to respond to the queries of the researcher have therefore been excluded in this paper.

82.   Information on all the organizations listed in this section was obtained from websites as well as interviews with senior representative of the respective organisations. In every interview the battle for sustainable funding became a central theme. Representatives spoke of the frustration of dealing with state

bureaucrats who delayed responding to their applications for funding which resulted in delays in the implementation of new projects. Small NGOS spoke specifically about the struggle to deal with enormous amounts of paper work required by the department of labour or the SETAs.

6.2.1. Civil society programmes aimed at self employment[15]

83.   **School leavers opportunity programme** is based in KZN and is currently self-funded. They work mainly in one geographical area providing a one-stop help facility. They offer a four phase programme which includes basic lifeskills, vocational training, business skills and on going support.

84.   The **Self Help Group** approach in South Africa is part of the international movement started by Kindernothilfe. As in other parts of the world, groups are established with the poorest members in a community. In contrast to other development aid approaches, the group members receive no material help and members are required to contribute a weekly sum of money. The project currently works in KZN and E.Cape and by January 2006 they had established 180 Self Help Groups and 6 cluster associations in these areas. A key aspect of the programme is that it follows a bottom-up approach which means that change and progress is slow, but yields sustainable results.

85.   **Train, Empower, Nurture and Develop is** faith based organisation which was established by an independent charismatic church in 1998. It is a small NPO with international connections that works in Southern Africa. To date its main work has been to establish farms in a rural area. Their recent work has involved training 72 youths to form 16 co-operatives to build houses.

6.2.2. Civil Society programmes aimed at self development

86.   These programmes have been included as they represent a particular need of the youth. These organisations believe that in order to benefit from a skills development training programme, a youth who has been short changed by the schooling system, and the state in general, first requires an intervention which will make him or her 'ready for learning'. These programmes focus initially on developing social and fundamental competencies rather than a narrow technical competency.

87.   **Student Partnership Worldwide** and **Operation Mobilisation**   are two christian based organisations that rely on international volunteers. Both organisations have established bases in a few specific rural areas from which their volunteers work. Their main focus is to promote healthy lifestyles.

88.   **Spiral Trust** currently work mainly in the peri urban areas of the Eastern Cape. The core of their work is to provide young people with a sense belonging from which they can develop their own identity. Although they are a small NGO, their work is cited here as they provide a model which is working toward providing a sustainable model for change.

89.   A faith based organisation that has a more eastern influence is **The Art of Living**. This is an internationally based programme that is based on the premise that one needs to develop inner understanding in order to lead a balanced life. They have three full time workers in South Africa and a number of volunteers who work in various settings, including the rural areas of the Eastern Cape.

90.   **Outward Bound South Africa** started in 1992 and currently operates in six rural areas. One of their focuses is to impact the lives of young people in South Africa who have been marginalized and disadvantaged by the injustices of the past. They work in partnership with other organizations to help 'youth at risk' develop life skills, compassion and a determined, positive attitude towards life.

91.   The **Laureus Sport for Good Foundation** is an example of using sport to effect social change. Laureus is an international organisation that was founded in 2000 and currently has eight projects in South Africa. The main sports used in these projects are soccer and boxing which seems to largely exclude girls from participation.

92.   The **South African Scout Association and Girl Guides Association of South Africa** have long established roots in South Africa and as international movements were allowed by the apartheid state to work

across the colour lines as long as the units remained separated by race. As in the rest of the world, both movements have had to realign themselves to new demands in accordance with the changes in the global world and the interests of youth. The Boy Scout movement reported that they were being particularly successful when they worked jointly with other NGOs and were working in with a provincial education department on a school based programme. The Girl Guides stated that they were currently involved in rural areas after an approach made by the department of education for them to start units in all the nodal areas of South Africa. The basis of both movements remains the concept of peer education in which young people take on leadership roles and train each other.

93.   **REFLECT** fuses the learning theories of Paulo Freire with the methodologies of participatory rural appraisal to engage people in the wider processes of development and social change while learning literacy and other communication skills. In 2006 there were eight organisations in South Africa using the REFLECT approach to support a wide range of development and educational objectives and a further 350 organisations preparing to introduce REFLECT. The national co-ordinator believed that there were an increasing number of youth participating in their programmes and estimated that in June 2007 the proportion of youth involved in the various programmes could be as high as 40%. She estimated that about 15% of the youth who were participating lived in peri-urban areas and that 80% of the youth were women. [16] She believed that youth participants who had dropped out of not only school, but also ABET, turned to REFLECT circles in their community as they found them more meaningful.

94.   A quick analysis of the organisations listed in this section reveals two interesting trends. They tend to have an international support base and rely heavily on the support of volunteers who have other means of financial support. It is also significant that two of the organisations have strong ties to a university. This is mutually beneficial as universities need to be involved in outreach programmes, have a ready body of skilled volunteers and are able to provide a support base to the organisation.

7. PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH LIVING IN RURAL AREAS IN NON FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

95.   This section provides some information on the participation levels of youth living in rural areas of South Africa. The issue of 'youth', 'rural' and 'non-formal education' crosscutting a number of categories of delivery has already been raised in this paper and the lack of statistical information that is available on participation reflects this.

7.1.   Level of participation in State initiate programmes

96.   The following achievements that are relevant to this paper were pointed out in the 2005-2006 annual report of the Department of Education:

- The National Youth Service compiled a list of 27 601 youth programmes.
- 8 042 learners participated in SETA skills programmes funded by provincial funds
- 89 092 learners enrolled for courses at grade 10-12 levels in adult learning centres. The proportion of youth taking part is not mentioned.

97.   These statistics provide some insights into the extent of participation in the various programmes initiated or supported by the state. However details on the participants such as age or geographical location were generally not provided so it is not possible to ascertain the extent of rural youth or even just youth participation.

7.1.1.   Participation of youth living in rural areas in learnerships

98.   The research on learnerships currently being conducted by the HSRC includes collecting data on the number of youth who have registered for more than one learnership programme. This is to asses to what extent learnership programmes are being attended in order to earn the stipend. An additional measure of the HSRC research is to assess to what extent learners get employment if they attend programmes driven by the training provider rather than the employer[17].

7.1.2.   Participation of youth living in rural areas in NCV

99.   Enrolments for 2007 for the new National Certificate (vocational) met 89.7% of the number of enrolments targeted by the Department of Education. The commitment to the new programme by the 50 FET colleges is evident in terms of the spread of enrolments across all faculties and all colleges. If one analyses the enrolment data carefully one cannot detect any obvious discrepancy between expected and actual targets.

100.   However the success of this first year will only become apparent in December 2007 after the first intake has completed their examinations. The first year has not been without teething problems including a major teacher strike in June which delayed the mid-year examination process. The following table gives some indication of the level of participation across the nine provinces.

Table 7.1: National % of total enrolments by Province

Province	DoE Approval	Actual College Enrolment
Eastern Cape	13%	11%
Free State	8%	6%
Gauteng	21%	27%
KwaZulu Natal	17%	13%
Limpopo	14%	14%
Mpumalanga	7%	8%
Northern Cape	3%	3%
North West	5%	5%
Western Cape	12%	13%
	100%	**100%**

Source: Vinjevold, DOE, personal communication

101.   The table above show that Gauteng province has the highest percentage of students. This is appropriate as it is the most densely populated province. Similarly the other eight provinces reflect their demographic make up. The only possible exception is Limpopo which is a mainly rural province, but has the second highest proportion of learners. Again no discrepancy was found between the rural and urban campuses of these colleges.

102.   During visits to two of the colleges, the researcher was told by a number of educators that there was considerable concern regarding the open access policy used by the department of education. These lecturers suggested that there were many, very weak students, both in terms of language and mathematics ability who had been admitted to engineering programmes. The lecturers recommended an entrance test be administered in future. Alternatively they suggested that some form of bridging course be introduced for learners who had poor learning histories.

8.   PARTICIPATION: BARRIERS AND ENABLING FACTORS

8.1.   Identifying the barriers to participation

103.   This section explores the range of barriers and enabling factors that influence the level of participation in non-formal education programmes that are available to youth living in rural areas in South Africa.

8.1.1.   Working in silos

104.   One of the main barriers to obtaining a focus on youth is that 'youth' is not a clearly defined category and concerns many different state departments and organizations in civil society. These departments and organizations often work in isolation or silos which results in uncoordinated and duplicated initiatives. While it would seem that the need to focus on youth is being recognised it is obvious that getting funding to support political will is still problematic. This research highlights the difficult task of directing the state's attention to the special needs of the youth.

105.   While educators working in the pre-school sector have managed to professionalize their workforce, people working with youth still tend to lack formal training and are usually volunteers. In the process of this research a trade unionist working in education mentioned that there had been two learnership programmes accredited with the Education SETA since 2006, but there were no registered learners on the programme. As already discussed in this paper, various other organizations are offering training for youth workers, but none of the programmes have been accredited and would therefore not be recognized by the state for employment purposes. Although there are training programmes aimed youth workers most are not accredited or require a grade 12 senior school certificate such as the one offered by UNISA. This has resulted in an insecure and transient workforce with no career path opportunities.

8.1.2.   Access to information

106.   Poor infrastructure and limited access to information continue to characterize life in rural South Africa. The following section provides a backdrop to the difficulties possibly encountered by a young person trying to obtain information on education and training opportunities that might lead to employment. As indicated earlier, in 2000 less than 30% of youth living in a rural area knew how to access such information. Given that the local school is likely to be a main source of information, the following table, based on data obtained from the 'Emerging Voices' study, highlights how this is unlikely to be a rich source of information as very few had computers, libraries or even a fax machine. Unfortunately the study did not expand on the possible role of local educators or other personnel.

Table 8.1 Summary of Facilities in Schools in KZN, Limpopo & E. Cape (N=149)

45% drinking water	4% fax
43% electricity	25% copier
22% telephone	12% computer
5 % library	39% radio

Source: Emerging Voices (2005:72 and 84)

107.   The following extract was received by the researcher from a field worker based in Libode, a rural area near Umtata in the Eastern Cape. The extract is based on observations made in January 2007 and were provided in response to a query by the researcher for some 'on the ground' comments.

> *When you mentioned text books some schools I visited didn't have any. There were class sizes sometimes in excess of 80 learners. In one high school there had been 16 suicides because they said they fail at school and can't get jobs. Electricity is expensive so some did not have it. Many young men worked on the roads but the*

contractors usually came from another larger town so the young men only ever did manual labour. We were told 50% of the learners were orphans in many schools. The distances they have to travel were significant and taxi fares high. Youth pregnancies were high and young men rarely supported the young women or the baby. Many young women were caring for their sister's babies when sisters had died. It was quite depressing for the youth. I would love to see young people training in trades like carpentry to provide desks and chairs to learners at school as many learners were sitting on the floor. [18]

108.   The formal findings of the 'Emerging Voices' research and the more anecdotal comments in the above paragraph both point to how difficult it would be for a youth who had recently left one of these schools to access quality information regarding learning opportunities.

109.   Another traditional source of information is the local library. In 2003 there were 1800 public libraries in South Africa with less than 10% of secondary schools having a library.[19] According to a municipal librarian none of the libraries in her mostly rural province provide Internet access to their users. In contrast, in 2005 a third of the libraries in a more urban province already provided free internet access. This kind of disparity has enormous implications for youth trying to access information in a global world that increasingly assumes internet access is the norm.

110.   In the last two years attempts by the state as well as international funders have attempted to rectify this absence of infrastructure in rural areas by establishing multi-purpose centres. Various strategies currently co-exist, but the ultimate goal of all the initiatives is to improve the access to information for people living in impoverished areas of South Africa

111.   If a youth was lucky enough to obtain a copy of the booklet developed by the government in 2006 which lists over '50 government sponsored opportunities for growth, development and prosperity', s/he would find information on skill development programmes in it. Most of these programmes are linked to SETA accredited courses and describe learnerships. According to the UYF, in the future, this kind of information might be obtained from a local Youth Advisory Centre based at a multi-purpose site. There is a free country-wide hotline which can be phoned to obtain further information. The researcher used the free number to enquire what the education requirements were for the listed programmes and was immediately referred to the central office for each programme. Information is also available from websites and one of the 115 offices of the Department of Labor. Although this department's offices are fairly widespread, they are all in towns.

112.   When reading the websites of the various SETAs it becomes obvious that the most handicapping factor is not a lack of education, but of access to information. Learnerships are advertised through the department of labor offices, on various websites and in newspapers. This process favors urban people with easy access to either print or electronic media. The Department of Education (DOE 2006:75) adds to this impression that current strategies merely reinforce race, gender and education inequalities as in their 2006 annual report it is stated that young white males are still the group most likely to receive training.

8.1.3.   Programmes beyond reach

113.   In April 2007, David Benatar, professor of Philosophy at the University of Cape Town (UCT) gave his inaugural lecture on affirmative action and how it was applied when employing staff at UCT.[20] The details of his arguments go beyond the subject of this paper, but what he pointed out was that those who were really penalized by apartheid were unlikely to benefit from current compensatory initiatives because they could not even compete for positions at UCT. Those most likely to benefit were those who had received adequate education to be considered for an academic position at UCT and happened to be 'black'. This problem is similar to that experienced by the youth of South Africa who live in rural areas. The current skill development strategies for which youth are eligible, such as ASGISA and learnerships programmes offered through the SETAs tend to require grade 12 school leaving certificates or work experience as most are aimed at NQF level 4 and above.

114.   As mentioned earlier in this paper the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF) is the organ of the state that has the main responsibility for meeting skills and employment needs of the youth. However they openly state that their current focus is on developing a database to meet the needs of unemployed graduates. This means that a youth without a school leaving certificate who enters a Youth Advisory Centre is unlikely to find much information suited to his/her needs.

115.   Another related problem is that it is hard for youth who are employed to find opportunities to further develop their skills. This can be clarified by the following example: if a youth who completed grade 11 works at a game farm and is seen by the owner as having potential in management, s/he is yet not eligible for any of the development programmes offered by the state as he is employed. Private education programmes are prohibitively expensive so unless the youth chooses to become unemployed, s/he is unlikely to benefit from any of the current strategies and will remain underemployed in terms of his potential[21].

8.1.4.   Attitude of learners

116.   As mentioned previously in this report the DOE (2006) found that 12% of learners dropped out of school because they found it uninteresting. Lecturers at FET colleges report that learners enrolled in the NCV programmes did not attend classes and there was no mechanism in place to insist that learners attend the classes. The LFS (2005) also mentioned previously, indicated that young people were not interested in volunteering. Thus programmes looking for volunteers or employers offering the chance to obtain unpaid work experience are unlikely to be attractive options for the youth in South Africa.

8.2.   Enabling factors to participation

8.2.1.   Using local brokers to inform the youth

117.   Although a national framework potentially provides an enabling infrastructure to access the youth, real access can only be acquired if there is a structure in place at the local level. This structure, even if it only a single person, requires support and efficient and easy access to information pertaining to education and training opportunities available to the youth. South Africa is currently experimenting, albeit in an uncoordinated manner, with various models of local support.

118.   Most encouraging is the increase in the training of community workers. Various learnerships have been delivered by a variety of service providers and municipalities, particularly in the Eastern Cape who have started to employ community workers. While service providers will still complain about tardy bureaucracy and the slow process of getting departments to implement learnerships, it is encouraging that people are being trained to look at community development in a holistic way.

119.   One of the successful learnership programmes is run by the Centre for Social development (CSD) which is based at Rhodes University in the Eastern Cape. The centre was established in 1981 as a self-funding institute and still operates with the same status although it has since registered as an independent non profit organisation. From early days CSD had a strong focus on early childhood development (ECD) and subsequently developed a model which uses ECD centres as a springboard to develop the entire community. The ECD centres are developed into multi-purpose community centres, and utilize community development practitioners that work alongside ECD practitioners to serve all the children, families and community members in a particular area. They have found that their most successful community workers are older women who have long standing connections the community in which they are based.

8.2.2.   Partnerships

120.   The establishment in South Africa of Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) which are funded via a skill levy paid by employers is an example of a partnership than can be mutually beneficial.

121.   Since 2002 Linkages and Programme Units have been established at sixteen of the fifty FET Colleges in South Africa. This development was in response to increasing pressure for the FET colleges to be more responsive to the needs of the job market.. These units are required to establish links with partners including state departments, SETAs, industry, business and other educational institutions. Linkages and formal agreements are made when a partner has a specific training requirement and the college agrees to meet this need. The units are responsible for putting the programme and staff in place to deliver and roll out the training. DOE (2007:39) lists a range of new programmes that have been implemented by these units following this process. These include bio-fuels, tourism, agri-processing, training of local government employees and training for the construction industry.

9. CONCLUSION

122. The examples in this paper have indicated, how a system, the NQF, which was introduced specifically to redress the inequalities of the past, is reproducing these inequalities. Mechanisms such as the recognition of prior learning and accreditation of programmes that facilitate articulation so learners can re-entry into the formal education system were designed to enable access. While these mechanisms are in place, it would appear that rural learners are still being disadvantaged by the system. Examples throughout this paper highlight the lack of access to information and the weak infrastructure that still exists in the rural areas of South Africa. In addition weak learning histories as a result of attending poorly resourced rural schools with demoralized educators inflate this problem. Learners exiting from these schools lack the written language and mathematical competence to access alternative programmes. They also lack the will to engage with society.

123. The most obvious recommendation is the need to establish a co-ordinated programme of action that addresses youth from a holistic perspective. It might be too simple to argue against programmes that solely provide skill development facilities, given the level of unemployment, particularly amongst the youth. The current neo-liberal focus on funding and supporting only NQF aligned programmes is too narrow as many of these programmes do not address the needs of the learners from a holistic perspective. In addition all the evidence points to the need for programmes to provide more than skill development and to include at least some emotional input and ongoing support for participants. The employability case study conducted by the HSRC which was mentioned earlier confirms this. Programmes should not be piecemeal, but provide integrated and sustained involvement in the lives of individuals.

124. The current strategies are in essence still compensatory in nature and ultimately one needs to tackle the issue of upward mobility, by starting education much earlier in a person's life. The role of a positive learning experience in early childhood should not be ignored as it sets the foundations for lifelong learning. Following this line of thought, programmes that have roots in early childhood development, but now work more broadly, for example the community development programme of the Centre for Social Development and the community volunteers of the Family Literacy Project, give one an ideal opportunity to harness in the youth.

125. Partnerships should be formed with organisations across sectors that have different kinds of expertise. These partnerships should be at the local level where actual needs and interests of the youth can be readily identified. Partners should maintain their individual identities, but work together to avoid duplication and to improve efficiency. The newly established youth advice centres would be an ideal starting point. The development of local multi-purpose centres which are ideal meeting and delivery venues should be encouraged.

126. In terms of actual interventions, there is a need for greater collaboration by the state and civil society. The work done by NGOs who have not sought accreditation for their programmes should not be ignored, but supported. At present funding favours the accredited and NQF aligned programmes. While it is true that these programmes create an easier access path to further education and training opportunities they do not necessarily lead to an increased opportunity to find employment. However unlike unwieldy state interventions, these small-scale non accredited interventions, are usually run by highly skilled and committed people and are flexible enough to meet changing demands. Without romanticising their work and while recognising the dangers of paralysing these initiatives by trying to replicate models, or developing them to scale, the roll out of funding and support to these organisations needs to be streamlined. In addition funding should last well beyond start up funding in order to ensure that the organisations are themselves sustainable. All the directors of NGOs who were consulted in the process of the research who are running programmes that are not accredited, stated that they have chosen this route because of the tiresome bureaucratic demands of becoming accredited. If it was made easier for them to register and become accredited, they would participate.

127. As already mentioned in rural areas in South Africa libraries are scarce and internet is even less accessible. There are various state and private sector initiatives to establish multi-purpose community centres

that will include some form of access to information. These include the Education Centres being developed by Media in Education Training which aim to address the lack of access to information by establishing networks of education centres that bringing a range of resources and services closer to rural schools and communities.

128.   The development of the new National Certificate (vocational) that is being offered nationally at FET colleges is an encouraging development. One of the significant additions to this new curriculum is the inclusion of life orientation as a compulsory subject. If taught properly it might create the space that develops an essentially skill orientated programme into one that addresses the needs of youth more holistically. In addition this programme combines theory with a practical component in the work place giving learners the kind of experience required to increase their likelihood of gaining employment after completing the programme.

129.   This paper has drawn together a range of statistical information on youth that can be used when it is necessary to make choices, for example:

- The highest number of youth drops out of school before completion because of financial restraints – it might be an easy remedy to the 'out of school' problem is to start an easily accessible, state funded bursary fund.
- If a youth belongs to an organisation, it is likely to be a faith based one. Perhaps one needs to bring in the faith based organisation in a more strategic way so that they start to provide more than spiritual guidance and the occasional sewing group.
- The rural youth have indicated that they are not interested in developing their agricultural skills, but would prefer to acquire technical skills. New courses should meet this need.

130.   It would be much easier to throw up ones hands in horror at the enormity of the task, but it is important to look for the droplets of good work done in the turbulent sea. There are many small scale initiatives of the state and civil society that work and produce a steady trickle of change. It is these droplets that must be found and studied. Current wisdom would be to put the droplets in a bucket so that they can form a bigger stream, but perhaps this needs to re-thought so that the individual energy and spontaneity of the droplet is not lost.

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End Notes

1 Discussion largely based on information in Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) and Emerging Voices

2 ISRDS (2000:6) In this document the terms poor and moderately poor are used without definition. The work of Bhorat H & Oosthuizen M (2006) indicates that this is not unusual and poverty still has to be defined in South Africa.

3 Combined school are not exclusively primary or secondary.

4 Source; Health economics and HIV/AIDS Research Division

5 Emmet (2005:139) used the following measures for the analyses. Poverty lines were set at 20% per capita household expenditure (R1 305) and 40 percent per capita household expenditure (R2352). Individuals falling within the lowest 20 percent per capita expenditure category were classified as ultra poor while those falling within the 20 percent-40 percent lowest per capita expenditure category were classified as moderately poor.

6 Labour Force Survey 2005, Statistics SA

7 CASE (2000:22) states that community services include services offered by private institutions, NGOs, CBOs and other non-state organisations

8 Zulu term for meeting or conference, originally for an assembly of the chiefs

9 UYF report (2005:31) own calculations

10 DOE (2006) states that there were 12 197 726 enrolled in school in South Africa in 2005.

11 The SA government maintains there are two economies operating in the country. The first is a globally competitive sophisticated economy based on skilled labour. The second economy is mainly informal, marginalised and populated by people unemployable in the formal sector.

12 Personal communication: Florus Prinsloo (DoL) and Renette du Toit (HSRC) – 18 August 2007.

13 Personal communication: Ms P Vinjevold (Deputy Director General FET), 17 August 2007.

14 For example the franchise fund has the following 'race' targets: 60% African, 30% coloured and 10% Indian.

15 Details of these programmes can be found in the appendix

16 Personal communication, Louise Knight, June 2007

17 Personal communication with researcher at the HSRC who is conducting research for DOL.

18 Source: Personal communication, Heather Ferris, Canadian researcher working in Libode, July 2007

19 SA yearbook 2006/2007 chapter 5 – Arts and Culture http://www.gcis.gov.za/docs/publications/yearbook/chapter5.pdf

20 The full text of the lecture can be found at http://www.news.uct.ac.za/mondaypaper/archives/?id=6280

21 actual story obtained by the researcher