

APPENDIX TWO

Further Education and Training and Adult Basic Education and Training

INTRODUCTION

Education has undergone tremendous changes since the coming to power of the ANC led government in 1994. Not only has the government been faced with challenges of eradicating racial inequality, discrepancies in provision of resources and learning material in schools and ensuring equity, but increasingly it has had to deal with issues of global competitiveness and economic growth which have inevitably had considerable impact on education. These challenges have had considerable influence in the way education and training has been thought about in South Africa.

This appendix explores educational opportunities which both Further education and Training and Adult Basic Education and Training present to both adults and youth within the enabling environment of the National Qualifications framework (NQF) and South African Qualifications Framework (SAQA)

UNDERSTANDING THE NQF AND SAQA

The National Qualifications Framework is a central pillar of the government's strategy for human resource development. The South African Qualifications Authority Act of 1995 established SAQA as the organisation responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the NQF.

The primary function of SAQA is to pursue the objectives of the NQF. With regard to *development* of the NQF, SAQA is responsible for

- formulating and publishing policies and criteria for registration of bodies responsible for establishing education and training standards or qualifications and
- accreditation of bodies responsible for monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of such standards or qualifications.

With regard to *implementation* of the NQF, SAQA is responsible for the

- registration or accreditation of national standards bodies and accreditation bodies,
- registration of national standards and qualifications,
- ensuring international comparability of registered standards and qualifications and
- ensuring compliance with accreditation provisions.

All SAQA's functions are to be executed in consultation and cooperation with the departments of state, statutory bodies, companies, bodies and institutions responsible for education, training and the certification of standards that will be affected by the NQF.

Standards and qualifications

Processes for development of standards and qualifications are becoming a central concern of education and training providers. Processes initiated within the SAQA framework include:

- establishment and operationalisation of twelve NSB's
- establishment and recognition of standards generating bodies or initiatives
- evaluation of standards and qualifications submitted for registration on the NQF
- development of a strategy for international benchmarking of standards and qualifications.

NATIONAL STANDARDS BODIES(NSB'S)

NSB's operate within the SAQA regulatory framework. National Standards Bodies Regulations were promulgated on 28 March 1998 to provide a legal basis for the establishment and operationalisation of NSB's.

According to the regulations each NSB should normally be composed of six members in the categories of business, organised labour, community/learner, critical interest group, state departments and providers of education and training. All NSB's are also required to meet specific criteria concerning representivity - 33% each in respect of gender and race.

The twelve NSB's represent organising fields:

NSB 01 : Agriculture and Nature Conservation

NSB 02: Culture and Arts

NSB 03 : Business, Commerce and Management Studies

NSB 04 : Communication Studies and Language

NSB 05 : Education, Training and Development

NSB 06 : Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology

NSB 07 : Human and Social Studies

NSB 08 : Law, Military Science and Security

NSB 09 : Health Sciences and Social Services

NSB 10 : Physical, Mathematics, Computer and Life Sciences

NSB 11 : Services

NSB 12 : Physical Planning and Construction

STANDARDS GENERATING BODIES OR INITIATIVES

As a short term response, SAQA responded to requests from groups and organisations for recognition either as standards generating bodies or as standards generating initiatives. Some groups have requested that they be allowed to participate in existing standards generating activities. Among these groups are Early Childhood Development, Adult Basic Education and Training, Information Technology, Environmental Studies and Safety and Security.

In terms of its developmental responsibilities SAQA has undertaken processes of drafting criteria and guidelines for the establishment or recognition of standards generating bodies or initiatives and evaluation of standards and qualifications submitted for registration on the NQF.

REGISTRATION OF STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS

As part of its approved five year business plan, SAQA specified as one of its objectives, to provide interim registration of existing recognised qualifications on the NQF for a transitional period of five years. Accordingly, providers of education and training submitted existing whole qualifications to be considered for registration on the NQF. This process is to be managed in multiple strands of activity.

The first was a strand of activities relating to existing qualifications. Recording of existing qualifications was to be completed by June 1998, alignment qualifications with NQF requirements and re-submission of existing is to be completed by 30 June 2000 for the purposes of interim registration. A diverse range of education and training providers - such as universities, technikons, health councils, statutory bodies, private providers and non-governmental organisations - submitted qualifications for recording and interim registration. A number of international providers operating in South Africa also sought interim registration.

A second strand of activity relates to new standards and qualifications. NSB's and SGB's are responsible for development and evaluation of new standards and qualifications for the longer term. In addition in the case of higher education SAQA has agreed, subject to some proviso's, to record and register until 30 June 2000 whole qualifications, which did not exist before 30 June 1998 or had not been approved by an agency recognised by SAQA before that date. All such qualifications will have to be resubmitted in accordance with Regulation 11 (1) (b) and (c) in order to retain their interim registration status until no later than 30 June 2003.

The interim registration process is intended to provide an overview of all existing qualifications in South Africa. The information gathered from this exercise is to be provided to NSB's and other stakeholders to enhance their work.

NSB MANUAL

Since NSB's have been established and are becoming operational, SAQA has identified the urgent need for assisting NSB's to set up organisational, administrative and management procedures. Accordingly an NSB manual has been developed in consultation with NSB's . The main audience for the manual is the NSB; it provides NSB members with key documents and concepts in one file and can also be used as an orientation document for new members and alternate members of NSB's. The manual contains information on:

- key concepts in standards setting
- key functions of national standards bodies
- roles and responsibilities of NSB members
- roles and responsibilities of SAQA staff
- procedures for application for standards generation bodies or initiatives
- procedures and criteria for evaluation of standards and qualifications
- procedures for procurement of services
- legal framework for functioning of NSB's.

QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

In terms of the SAQA Act, Education and Training Quality Assurance bodies are to be recognised by SAQA for the purposes of monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of national standards or qualifications. The regulatory framework for quality assurance - the Education and Training Quality Assurance Bodies Regulations - was gazetted on 8 September 1998.

According to the regulations an organisation or group of organisations can seek accreditation as an ETQA body in a social sector, economic sector or an education and training subsystem sector. The regulations include

- specific provisions relating to the ETQA, including criteria for accreditation of ETQA's, membership and functions of ETQA's
- rules of procedure and financing the activities of ETQA's
- accreditation of providers of education and training
- appointment and functions of moderating bodies
- inclusion of professional bodies and examining bodies in standard setting, quality assurance and moderation

Bodies currently carrying out ETQA functions will continue to do so until the regulatory framework is operational. Where no quality assurance bodies exist, SAQA is mandated to perform this function in the interim. For example, private higher education institutions are required in terms of the Higher Education Act to register with the registrar for private higher education institutions. SAQA is responsible for providing interim accreditation to such institutions. Accordingly SAQA initiated discussions with the Higher Education Branch of the Department of Education, the Certification Council (SERTEC) and the Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) to facilitate the accreditation of private higher education providers until the Higher Education Quality Committee is established and operational.

According to the SAQA 1997/98 annual report sixteen bodies had applied for accreditation as ETQA's, ranging in type from industry training boards, professional bodies and councils, statutory bodies and ABET providers. Twenty-five institutions and providers applied for preliminary accreditation as private higher education institutions, ranging from small and large providers offering a range of programmes including ABET practitioner qualifications, management and accountancy, computer training and theology.

QUALITY ASSURANCE FUNCTIONS OF SETAS

The role of the SETA in relation to education and training quality assurance (ETQA) functions is important. Each SETA is required to seek accreditation from SAQA (South African Qualifications Authority) within one week of being established and are expected to satisfy conditions to be recognised as SETAs within 18 months. All SETAs are required to be ETQAs, although not every ETQA will be a SETA.

The main quality assurance functions in relation to provision of education and training are to assure the quality of programmes and those providing them and to assure the quality of the learning experience and the quality of learner assessment. The manner in which these functions will be fulfilled are to be agreed with SAQA. SETAs will be expected to accredit

the providers of education and training. This will involve the SETA in a range of activities, inter alia:

- instituting arrangements to monitor providers for example through audits and spot checks, to ensure that they comply with relevant legislation, such as health and safety legislation and employment conditions;
- monitoring provision of education and training to ensure that agreed programmes are followed and to assess the quality of teaching and training;
- promoting quality and striving for continuous improvement in the standards and delivery of programmes;
- cooperating with National Standards Bodies, supporting Standards Generating Bodies and working closely with other ETQA's;
- certificating learners and guarantee that people have a qualification or description of the standards and competencies they have attained which has bona fides and is issued by a proper authority;
- reporting to SAQA on the fulfilment of their ETQA functions.

The main requirement for SETA's as regards their ETQA functions, is to ensure that SAQA requirements are fulfilled. These include the requirements that:

1. the SETA does actually represent a sector;
2. the SETA should determine its area of primary focus of quality assurance in that sector, in other words, each SETA will have to enter into an agreement with SAQA about the levels and qualifications for which it will be responsible;
3. the SETA should not duplicate the work of another ETQA, such as the Higher Education Quality Council, various statutory and professional councils or the proposed Further Education and Training Quality Assurance body. In such cases agreements or joint assessment arrangements will be needed to avoid duplication and waste of effort in fulfilling ETQA functions for different levels of qualifications; the SETA as ETQA should have a quality management system, not only for influencing their own work but also to ensure that all providers have such systems and that these will be monitored and reviewed

The idea of a National Qualifications Framework for South Africa emerged in the early 1990s from the intention of transforming the nature and quality of education and training in South Africa. It is described as

a human resource development system in which there is an integrated approach to education and training which meets the economic and social needs of the country and the developmental needs of the individual.¹

This means that different forms of learning, whether they be full-time or part-time, distance learning, work-based learning, or life experience, will be recognized, accredited, and registered within this new framework. This integrated approach to education, training, and development is designed to enable individuals to learn regardless of age, circumstances, and level of education and training.

The NQF is composed of eight levels, the first of which (the General Education and Training Certificate level) incorporates four sub-levels of ABET.

¹ Department of Education, 1997. Directorate: Adult Education and Training. *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. Final Draft. Department of Education: Pretoria. p. 6.

STRUCTURE OF THE NQF²

NQF Level	Band	Types of Qualifications and Certificates	Locations of Learning for units and qualifications
8	Higher	Doctorates Further Research Degrees	Tertiary / Research / Professional institutions
7	Education And Training	Higher Degrees Professional Qualifications	Tertiary / Research / Professional institutions
6		First Degrees Higher Diplomas	Universities / Technikons / Colleges / Private / Professional Institutions / Workplace, etc.
5		Diplomas, Occupational Certificate	Universities / Technikons / Colleges / Private / Professional institutions / Workplace
Further Education and Training Certificate			
4	Further Education	School/College/Trade Certificates Mix of units from all	Formal high schools/ Technical/Community RDP and Labour Market
3	and	School / College / Trade Certificates Mix of units from all	Private/State Schools Police / Nursing / Private Colleges
2	Training	School / College / Trade Certificates Mix of units from all	Training Boards / Unions / Workplace ,Etc
General Education and Training Certificate			
1	General Education And Training	Senior Phase ----- Intermediate Phase ----- Foundation Phase ----- Preschool	ABET Level 4 ----- ABET Level 3 ----- ABET Level 2 ----- ABET Level 1
			Formal Schools (Urban / Rural / Farm / Special) Occupation / Work-Based Training / RDP / Labour Market Schemes / Upliftment / Community Pro-Grammes NGOs / Churches / Night Schools / ABET Pro-Grammes / Private Providers / Industry Training Boards / Unions / Workplace

The three bands reflect the three main groupings of education and training:

- The Higher Education and Training band, which deals with all learning related to national diplomas, degrees and post-graduate education.

²Source: EIC and the IEB. 1996. *Understanding the National Qualifications Framework*. Heinemann. Johannesburg.

- The Further Education and Training band, which encompasses school and technical/community colleges certificates.
- The General Education and Training band. The ABET sub-levels one to four, fall within this band and is equivalent to the general compulsory phase of schooling, that is up to Grade Nine.

FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In his Call to Action statement, Minister of education, Prof. Asmal declared that 'We must create a vibrant further education and training system to equip youth and adults to meet the social and economic needs of the 21st century.'³ Further Education and Training (FET) is a new band in the education and training system; designed to integrate education and training. As indicated in the NQF Structure, FET includes learning programmes from levels 2-4 and that will correspond with grades 10 to 12 in the school system and N1 to N3 in the technical college. It is envisaged that when fully developed, FET will provide access to high quality education and training which will offer a wider range of options to a diverse range of learners. Currently, it is estimated that there are nearly 8 000 FET providers catering for almost 3 million learners and that FET already accounts for over 10 billion rands annually.⁴

The White Paper sees FET as an 'important allocator of life chances' in so far as it is directed at those learners who are

situated at the cross-roads between General Education and Training (GET) and entry to HE [higher education] and the world of work...As such, it provides both initial and second-chance opportunities to young people and adults.⁵

The document also states that FET is 'designed to promote the integration of education and training, and to enhance learner mobility and progression, which are at the heart of the NQF'.⁶

The Ministry of Education envisages that the transformation of Further Education and Training will

address the transformation of the senior secondary school system, the technical colleges and community colleges, and the development of new, meaningful education and training opportunities for young people outside formal education. The widening of participation in FET must also include working adults and those of our people experiencing long-term unemployment.⁷

As indicated earlier this new band has been designed to combine education and training. Traditionally, vocational education in South Africa has been defined as skills-training in specific occupations,⁸ that is, in terms of responding to specific demands of the employment market, like for example security guard training. However with the new integrated approach

³ Asmal K, (1999). Call to Action: Mobilising Citizens to Build a South Africa education and Training System for the 21st Century, Statement by Prof. K. Asmal, Minister of education, 27 July 1999

⁴ Department of Education (1998). *White Paper on Further Education and Training*. programme for the transformation of Further Education and Training, August 1998

⁵ *ibid.* p. 14.

⁶ Ministry of Education (1998) *Education White Paper 4 - A Programme for the Transformation of Further Education and Training*, 25 September 1998. p. 14.

⁷ *ibid.* p. 15.

⁸ *ibid.* p. 52.

to education and training, it is envisaged that vocational education be part of the Further Education and Training (FET) band. Hence,

the new [FET] curriculum will overcome the outdated divisions between ‘academic and ‘vocational’ education, and between education and training and will be characterised not by ‘vocalisation’ of education, but by a sound foundation of general knowledge, combined with practical relevance. The curriculum will offer the learner flexibility and choice, whilst ensuring that all programmes and qualifications offer a coherent and meaningful learning experience.⁹

As it is envisaged that FET will play a major role in terms of preparing people for the world of work, the implementation of the Skills Development Act (elaborated upon later in this appendix) will also present a challenge for FET institutions and provincial authorities. Institutions and provincial authorities will have to develop their capacity to offer and manage learnership made available by the Sector Education and Training Authority; to launch and sustain programmes which will attract support from the National Skills Fund.¹⁰

NEEDS AND CONTEXT

In terms of the new changes, grade 10, 11 and 12 fall under the Further Education and Training band. Nevertheless, in terms of recent statistical information gathered by researchers such as Bot and Shindler and CEPD, numbers of students in these grades are still combined with learners in General Education and Training Sector. The table below, tries to show the estimated numbers of learners in Further Education and Training, i.e. learners enrolled in grades 10 to 12.¹¹ These figures continue to show that the majority of learners in FET are to be found in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Province.

Estimates of Learners in FET by Grade and Province				
	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Eastern Cape	139 314	110 630	92 047	341 991
Free State	65 908	51 423	43 769	161 100
Gauteng	110 422	94 938	73 903	279 263
Kwa-Zulu/Natal	178 659	161 887	113 385	453 931
Mpumalanga	62 281	52 192	40 233	154 706
Northern Cape	13 267	10 168	8 241	31 676
Northern Province	135 277	131 557	141 806	408 640
North West	74 221	61 313	53 976	189 510
Western Cape	62 028	47 212	41 563	150 803
Total	841 377	721 320	608 923	2 171 620

Other important components of FET are community colleges most of which were established after 1994 with the purpose of offering second chance opportunities to youth and adults whose education was seriously disrupted during the fight against apartheid. Through these programmes young men, women and adults who want to further their education are given an opportunity to re-enter the education system or be trained for work. The table below provides

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 30.

¹⁰ Department of Education (1998) Education White Paper 4: A programme for the transformation of Further Education and Training, August 1998

¹¹ Table adapted from Bot and Shindler (1999) *op cit*

information about community colleges by province, numbers of learners registered in each, course offered and some comments on progress the programme has made since establishment.

Youth College Programme: Profile of Provincial Programmes as at 31 December 1998,

Province	Start up	Learners and sites	Main Campus in the Programme	Brief descriptors and comments on progress to date
Gauteng	1995	5200 4 sites	ASECA Building Technoprenuer Tourism	Project established as Youth College in 1996, registered as a Technical College, with its own governing Council Core curriculum is ASECA with electives in Building, Tourism and Enterprise development. Three new satellite campuses opened in 1997. Student registrations fail to meet expectations. Project evaluation implemented in 1998 DOE is considering the future of the programme beyond 1999.
Western Cape	1997	4379 40 Sites	FE Access College Higher Ed Access Hair Care Small Business Development ABET ASECA Matric Repeaters	Project established with the merger of three core Institutions and 18 linkage partners. Focus on Access Courses to Further and Higher Education and Employment. New extension to Correctional Services. Funding commitments secured for three years from RDP, Danida and Provincial government. Head Office Services to core and linkage partner: Networking, change management, financial systems and fund management, counselling and student services, staff training, curriculum development and accreditation, NQF pilot, evaluation. Business Services and Workplace Policy. Strong planning and monitoring links with Education Department
Mpumalanga	1998	360 2 Sites	Course development in progress Career Path Model	Established Career Guidance and Placement centre Renovations to two technical college sites in progress Training needs analysis complete – programme being developed – three lecturers trained Database in the making
Northern Cape	1998	596 3 Sites	Matric Repeaters Computer courses Vocational/Trade skills	Information and counselling available at DOL Employment Services centre at Kathu College No coherent programme design; no training for personnel Work Placement scheme under negotiation
North West	1998	3284 7 Sites	Matric Repeaters Computer courses Marshall Corps Vocational /Trade	Strong levels of support at ministerial levels between DTI, DOE and DOE Programme management through two directorates in DOE

Province	Start up	Learners and sites	Main Campus in the Programme	Brief descriptors and comments on progress to date
Northern Province	1998	3203 10 Sites	skills Technopreneur ASECA contract Information Technology And Computer courses Science Upgrading	Distinguished performance by Tsholofelo College wins Presidential Award Socio – economics survey completed and some staff training ASECA tender awarded but project put on hold Project under review as policy debates around FET intensify
Free State	1998	1180 10 Sites	ASESA Computer courses Building Skills Vocational /Trade Skills	Delivery mainly through colleges in rural area Limited opportunities for work-placement and job creation No co-ordinated approach to programme planning Bottlenecks slow down release of provincial funds.
Kwa-Zulu Natal	1998	3601 8 Sites	Vocational/Trade Skills Small Business Development. Access Science Agriculture	Mixed range of providers; NGO's; Youth Centres; Private Colleges Counselling and Post Training 'after care' in some centres Programme managed through the Chief Director: Arts, Culture, Sport, Rec., and Youth Affairs
Eastern Cape	1998	2209 10 Sites	Second chance matric Technopreneur Vocational/Trade Skills Computer courses Agriculture	Business Plans developed by Dir. of Tertiary and ABET and Dir. Technical Colleges Funding procedures slow to get moving. The Grahamstown Tech College Policy negotiations signal the commitment of DoE to integrate community colleges into the mainstream of a new FET system.

Despite various attempts to locate information about teaching and learning material and numbers of students in other FET providers such as technical colleges we have not been able to find any notable source.

The study of technical colleges in KwaZulu-Natal conducted by Human Science Resource Council ushers some light in relation to gaps and problems which exist in FET. Such problems include firstly, lack of links between institutions which results in institutions not being able to share resources despite being in the same locality or region. Secondly, inability of institutions to respond needs of their communities, for example, it was found that although some institution have responded to challenges of unemployment by offering short courses in self-employment, most have been hesitant about their social responsibility. Thirdly, lack of responsiveness in relation to industry - it was found that except for links with parastatals such as Iscor, Eskom and Sasol, technical colleges did not have links with other companies. The college -industry relationship is still dominated model which in terms of the new FET will be replaced by learnerships.¹²

¹² Motala S, Vally S and Modiba M (July 1999). "A Call to Action" A Review of Minister Asmal's Educational Priorities in Quarterly Review of Education and Training in South Africa, University of the Witwatersrand, EPU

RELEVANT POLICIES RELATING TO FET

As indicated earlier, FET is a new sector in the education and training system in South Africa. Nevertheless, the sector is poised for development and expansion in the light of recent events at the level of policy and preparation for large scale implementation. Various processes initiated by the Department of Education led to a number of positive, outcomes including:

- adoption of national policy¹³ and legislation¹⁴ on Further Education and Training late in 1998
- formation of a national stakeholder body, the National Board for Further Education and Training (NBFET) in mid 1999
- review of provincial pilot programmes delivered between 1996 and 1999 targeted at meeting the education and training needs of -out-school and out-of-work youth
- completion, by October 1999, of audits of technical colleges in three provinces (Gauteng, Kwazulu Natal and Western Cape)
- appointment of teams of specialists for the purpose of modernising curricula of vocational education courses offered mainly in technical colleges.

Similarly, processes initiated by the Department of Labour have led to:

- adoption of national policy and legislation¹⁵ in late 1998 on skills development of the workforce
- formation of the National Skills Authority
- review of pilot projects, anticipating the learnerships that are intended to replace the apprenticeship system.

The FET sector is thus poised for development. The Department of Education identified a number of priority areas in its National Strategic Plan for 1999 to 2001 as a step towards operationalisation of the FET policy. These include:

1. Development of norms, standards and procedures for the registration of private Further Education and Training institutions
2. Development of national guidelines for programme-based formula funding
3. Research on the design of a Further Education and Training EMIS
4. Review of the incorporation of senior secondary schools into Further Education and Training
5. Institutional development and support
6. Development of norms, standards and procedures for the declaration of Further Education and Training institutions
7. The improvement of learner performance in Further Education and Training
8. Revision and modernisation of selected Further Education and Training instructional offerings.

NQF /SAQA and FET

The NQF has been designed to promote integration of education and training and to also ensure recognition of prior learning. In terms of the NQF bands and levels, FET is offer through a multiplicity of institutions such as senior secondary schools, technical colleges,

¹³ *Education White Paper 4: A programme for the transformation of Further Education and Training; Preparing for the twenty-first century through education, training and work* Department of Education, Pretoria, August 1998.

¹⁴ *Further Education and Training Act, 1998 (Act No. 98 of 1998)*

¹⁵ *Skills Development Act, 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999*

finishing schools, community youth colleges, public adult learning centres, private providers etc. According to Educational White Paper 4 (1999)

The NQF provides a framework for the development of a new, integrated FET curriculum, which will offer flexible mix of fundamental, core and elective learning to meet the needs and requirements of learners, employers and HE institutions¹⁶

In terms of the requirements of the regulations under South African Qualifications Authority Act, FET qualifications are expected to be comprised of three components, namely fundamental learning, core learning and elective learning.¹⁷

In order to ensure quality in the sector it is envisaged that provincial departments will promote the quality of provision, provide support and guidance to institutional managers and professional staff. It is also expected that umbrella FET Quality Authority will be established to collaborate with Sector education and Training Authorities in ensuring quality in the FET band.¹⁸

Skills Development Strategy

The Skills Development Act (1998) of the Department of Labour proposes a new approach to the development of skills and is intended to address some of the shortcomings and flaws in existing training programmes such as the Scheme for Unemployed Persons, launched in 1985, programmes run under the former Manpower Training Act of 1981 (amended in July, 1990) and the Guidance and Placement Act of 1981. The Skills Development Act will replace the current legislation.

Some of the shortcomings identified in the Department of Labour's Green Paper related to the country's poor human resources record and failure to address middle level skill requirements in the economy. Others focused on problems in the industrial training system, such as the dramatic decline of artisan training, little or no training offered to workers below artisan level, informal training systems, a degree of inflexibility and an inability to adapt fast enough to changing economic and employment needs.

A further set of reasons related to the low impact of existing training programmes which was attributed to factors such as the:

- structural difficulties facing vulnerable groups in accessing training opportunities,
- lack of a clear employment framework within which programmes could be planned and delivered,
- lack of assistance to learners to find employment after training,
- lack of integration of basic education with the development of applied competence and
- lack of integration of learning programmes and work experience.

The Department of Labour therefore proposed a new approach to the development of skills which complements the formal education system in South Africa.

The Skills Development Act (1998)

¹⁶ Department of Education (1998). Educational White Paper 4: Programme for the transformation of Further education and Training. Pretoria, Department of education, August 1998

¹⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁸ *Ibid*

The Skills Development Act seeks to develop the skills of the workforce in both the public and private sector and thereby increase the quality of working life for workers, improve productivity, promote self-employment and the delivery of social services. A special focus in the Act is to improve the employment prospects of previously disadvantaged persons through education and training. Employment services are to focus on helping job seekers to find work, assist retrenched workers to re-enter the labour market and employers to find qualified employees. The Act also seeks to improve the quality of education and training in and for the workplace.

These objectives are to be achieved through establishing a stronger institutional and financial framework than previously existed under the Manpower Training Act of 1981, encouraging public private partnerships in the provision of education and training in and for the workplace and cooperating with the South African Qualifications Authority.

The six core components of the Skills Strategy are:

1. Establishing a stronger institutional framework: the National Training Board is to be replaced by a National Skills Authority which will advise the Minister of Labour on strategies, plans, priorities and targets for skills development and will ensure that these are adhered to. Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA's) will be responsible for developing sectoral skills plans which align to the national skills strategies and targets.
2. Establishing a stronger financial framework: the compulsory levy, which was initially part of the Skills Development Act, has been dealt with through a separate Bill and passed through the National Assembly in March 1999.
3. Two learning programmes are proposed - learnerships and skills programmes. Learnerships are intended to assist young unemployed people to enter employment and to assist existing workers to improve their skills levels.
4. Employment Services - to provide advice to people on a range of support services available to them; to assist with social plan measures in the event of mass retrenchments, assist vulnerable groups, direct individuals to job opportunities or self employment and inform employers about available skilled people
5. Labour market information: the collection, analysis and dissemination of information on labour market trends and their implications for skills development and employment.
6. Improving the quality of training provided by regional training centres, industry and company provision, training trusts and non governmental organisations - through alignment with the National Qualifications Framework and through new approaches to the planning, management, funding and evaluation of publicly financed programmes.

Skills Levy

In terms of the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999, employers, with some exemptions, must pay a skills development levy from 1 April 2000 at a rate of 0,5% of the leviable amount and from 1 April 2001 at a rate of 1% of the leviable amount.

However in terms of clause 4 of the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999, public service employers in the national or provincial sphere of government are exempted from paying this levy. In a schedule to the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 amendments to the Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998) have been inserted; the amendment to Section 30 included the insertion of Section 30A “Budget for training by national and provincial public entities” to the effect that:

“If 80 per cent or more of the expenditure of a national or provincial public entity is defrayed directly or indirectly from funds voted by Parliament, that entity must budget for at least-

(a) 0.5 percent of its payroll with effect from 1 April 2000

(b) one percent of its payroll with effect from 1 April 2001

for the training and education of its employees”.

Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA’s)

SETA’s are likely to vary in size and structure depending on a range of factors, including

- the overall size of the sector that is being served,
- the degree of complexity of its occupational structures,
- geographical factors and
- expectations within the sector about the range of services to be offered by the SETA.

However, all SETA’s will share core functions. The range of functions to be performed by SETA’s include:

- development and implementation of sector plans for skills development,
- development and implementation of learnerships,
- implementation of the National Qualifications Framework
- performing ETQA functions,
- reporting and liaison functions,
- internal management and administration.

A key function of a SETA is recovery and disbursement of levies, in accordance with the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 – see above.

Skills Sector Plans

A sector plan is intended to assess a range of factors - including contextual issues, sector dynamics, and demand and supply factors - and should set out priorities for the sector as a whole. These priorities will provide the framework for budgeting. The plan should take full account of regional and local training needs and strategies, but should also take a future oriented, forward look to assist decisionmakers, either employers or education and training providers, of the potential for development in the sector. The plan should be assessed through regular monitoring and evaluation and will have to be adapted in the light of experience.

The preparation of skills sector plans will need to embrace four principal elements. Firstly, contextual issues that will influence the preparation of skills sector plans include national policies such as macro economic and social policies and their impact on the sector, appropriate international experience, and research into trends and development targets.

The second set of factors relate to dynamics within the sector, including the need to set up a geographically dispersed operation and the need for specific “workplace” plans that will take into account a range of factors. These factors include variations across different branches and levels of the organisation, different geographical locations as well as the importance of

ensuring that the scope of the plan includes all employees and takes account of the diversity of needs of all employees in the organisation.

A third set of factors relate to an assessment of the organisational needs and demand for skills, particularly in relation to restructuring, possible effects of skills shortages on the effective functioning of the organisation and effective delivery of services in accordance with the organisation's mandate. Finally the roles and functions of training providers and capacity issues have to be considered to ensure that skills will be provided and developed.

In terms of the implementation of skills plans, there are two main functions. One is to ensure that national, provincial and local or workplace based plans are implemented. The second is to monitor and evaluate progress in achieving the objectives of the sector plan.

Development and Administration of Learnerships

The Skills Development Act, 1998 makes provision for learnerships as a central strategy to achieve the overall vision of an integrated skills development system.

Learnerships are based on the principle of integration. The Green Paper described learnerships as consisting of a structured learning component and practical work experience that leads to "nationally registered occupationally linked qualifications in areas of skill, need or opportunity in the labour market." The qualification should be recognised by SAQA.

The learnership system will require that a contractual agreement be made between a learner, employer or group of employers and an accredited training provider or group of providers. The agreement confers specific responsibilities on each party to the agreement and indicates conditions for the termination of the agreement.

Learnerships incorporate traditional apprenticeships and are similar to traditional apprenticeships insofar as they provide a work-based route for learning and gaining qualifications. But there are some important differences. While apprenticeships were essentially a response to the needs of the formal economy and tended to focus on blue collar trades, learnerships are to be offered in response to more broadly based social or economic needs and cover any occupations in which work-based learning paths are viable.

Furthermore, apprentices tended to be registered with a single employer for the duration of the apprenticeship, whereas learnerships will involve partnerships and cooperation between workplace contexts to provide learners with the necessary spectrum of work experience.

The learnership system is an attempt to build on the strengths of two systems that address the issues of education and training - the apprenticeship system and the National Qualifications Framework.

SETA's will have an important role to play in relation to development and administration of learnerships. SETA's will have to undertake functions in relation to :

- design, piloting and evaluation of learnership programmes at different levels of the National Qualifications Framework;
- dissemination of models and best practice, ensuring that educator and trainer development functions are established, particularly for workplace based coaches and mentors;
- identifying appropriate combinations of on and off the job provision, with an

appropriate balance between theoretical knowledge and practical experience and to ensure that SAQA's critical cross field outcomes are addressed - such as problem solving, communication, working in teams, use of information technologies.

- administering the registration of learnerships and monitoring the progress of individuals and providers of both on and off the job education and training
- problem-solving in relation to disputes and issues that will arise and that should preferably be resolved without having to refer these to the formal mechanism provided for in the legislation; these may also include the creation of a safety net to guarantee continuation of training for learners in the event that it cannot continue at a particular site as a result of sectoral dynamics, such as restructuring

Education and training providers will have to focus on the central importance of combining theoretical and practical training in an appropriate balance. In analysing the nature and type of theoretical and practical training needed, consideration should be given to the Learnerships Framework which has been developed through a consultative process initiated by the Department of Labour and SAQA.

Quality Assurance functions of SETAs

The role of SETA's in relation to education and training quality assurance (ETQA) functions is important. Each SETA is required to seek accreditation from SAQA (South African Qualifications Authority) within one week of being established and is expected to satisfy conditions to be recognised as SETAs within 18 months. All SETAs are required to be ETQAs, although not every ETQA will be a SETA.

The main quality assurance functions in relation to provision of education and training are to assure the quality of programmes and those providing them and to assure the quality of the learning experience and the quality of learner assessment. The manner in which these functions will be fulfilled are to be agreed with SAQA. SETAs will be expected to accredit the providers of education and training. This will involve the SETA in a range of activities, inter alia:

- instituting arrangements to monitor providers for example through audits and spot checks, to ensure that they comply with relevant legislation, such as health and safety legislation and employment conditions;
- monitoring provision of education and training to ensure that agreed programmes are followed and to assess the quality of teaching and training;
- promoting quality and striving for continuous improvement in the standards and delivery of programmes;
- cooperating with National Standards Bodies, supporting Standards Generating Bodies and working closely with other ETQA's;
- certificating learners and guarantee that people have a qualification or description of the standards and competencies they have attained which has bona fides and is issued by a proper authority;
- reporting to SAQA on the fulfilment of their ETQA functions.

The main implication for a SETA in considering its role in relation to SETA and ETQA functions, is to ensure that SAQA requirements are fulfilled. These include the requirements that:

1. the SETA does actually represent a sector;

2. the SETA is the primary focus of quality assurance in that sector, in other words, each SETA will have to enter into an agreement with SAQA about the levels and qualifications for which it will be responsible;
3. the SETA is not duplicating the work of another ETQA, such as the Higher Education Quality Council, various statutory and professional councils or the proposed Further Education and Training Quality Assurance body. In such cases agreements or joint assessment arrangements will be needed to avoid duplication and waste of effort in fulfilling ETQA functions for different levels of qualifications.

NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

Many young people in South Africa have, for various political and economic reasons, not been afforded the opportunity to develop their full potential. In the past, no specific policies or programmes were put into place to meet the needs of these young people. However, with the democratization of South African society, a *National Youth Policy*, approved by the National Youth Commission in 1997, has been developed to meet the specific needs of young people.

The National Youth Policy

recognizes and values young men and women as a key resource and national asset and places their needs and aspirations central to national development. It provides a foundation and mechanism for youth participation in socio-economic development whilst recognising that young people should be protagonists of their own development and not merely recipients of state support.¹⁹

The National Youth Policy is directed towards young people from 14 to 35 years, whilst recognizing that not all who fall into this range are identical. Some are at school or training institutions, others are not; some are employed, others are not; they may live in rural or urban environments; some young men and women are parents; some are disabled; and some have been the victims of abuse or mistreatment.²⁰

One of the five central goals of this policy is to develop ‘an effective, coordinated and holistic response to the issues facing young men and women’.²¹ To this end, policy has identified education and training as one of the key strategic areas for intervention. It sees education and training as ‘a major priority in the development of young men and women’, which will be linked to the need for human resource development within the youth sector.

In order to fulfil its objectives related to the education and training needs of young adults, the policy envisages the establishment of a national youth service programme, which will combine the themes of development, skills training, national unity, and service. These four themes are described as follows:

- development - where the skills and capacities of young women and men can be employed on projects and activities which promote development in South Africa;
- skills training - an opportunity for young people to gain new experiences and develop new skills which will benefit them later in life;

¹⁹ National Youth Commission. (1997). *National Youth Policy*. Pretoria. p. 7.

²⁰ *ibid.* p. 7.

²¹ National Youth Commission. (1997). *National Youth Policy*. Pretoria. p. 22.

- national unity - where young women and men from all walks of life are given the opportunity to work together with a spirit of reconciliation and national unity;
- service - where young people and the country as a whole benefit through volunteering their services for the benefit of the broader community.²²

The national youth service programme will be aimed at three target groups: out-of-school and unemployed young people; graduates of higher education; and de-mobilized young people and young 'returnees'. Its operating principles will include:

- reconstruction and development;
- accreditation within the NQF; and
- links to the national skills development strategy.

In its focus on the concerns of young people in the education and training sector, the national youth policy cautions against 'a narrow approach which can marginalise youth development issues.'²³ Instead, the document states that 'education and training of young men and women must be firmly positioned as a youth development strategy.'²⁴ Furthermore, the document states that:

It is through education and training that young men and women can be better prepared for life. The personal development of the individual young person, along with the development of local communities and the country as a whole is inextricably linked to the provision of quality, relevant and well managed education and training.²⁵

This emphasis on the links between personal developmental needs and the needs of the country as a whole are key features of not only the *National Youth Policy*, but the ABET Directorate's *Multi-Year Implementation Plan* and the new *Skills Development Act*. These policy documents reflect recognition that the worlds of education, training, and social and economic development are inextricably linked. These documents link education and skills formation to the social and economic needs of the country, and extend education and training to people both within and outside of so-called formal education systems and formal employment. However the relationship between education and training and social and economic development complex.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The national Department of Education's Directorate for Adult Education and Training draws a clear distinction between FET and ABET. It perceives ABET as follows:

Adult Basic Education and Training is the educational foundation for further education and training and enables learners to engage in further learning and employment opportunities²⁶

On the other hand, the focus of Further Education and Training is

²² *ibid.* p. 14.

²³ *ibid.* p. 29.

²⁴ *ibid.* p.29.

²⁵ *ibid.* p. 28.

²⁶ Department of Education, Directorate: Adult Education and Planning. (1997). *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. p. 6.

to foster mid-level skills; lay the foundation for higher education; facilitate the transition from school to the world of work; develop well-educated autonomous citizens; and provide opportunities for continuous learning, through the articulation of education and training programmes.²⁷

Thus, ABET provides a basic educational foundation, while FET is seen as the gateway to higher education and the world of work. Hence, the National Department of Education has opted for what it calls a *programmatic definition*²⁸ of FET. This refers to the fact that Further Education and Training refers to any learning programme at levels two to four on the NQF (which corresponds to the present grades ten to twelve in the school system and N1 to N3 in the technical college system).²⁹

The field of adult and youth education in South Africa has undergone significant changes in the past decade. Traditionally, this field fell under the ambit of what was commonly referred to as 'non-formal' education. In the past, the term non-formal education was used to describe such diverse activities as community education, worker education, vocational education, and life-skills education, that is,

any organised educational activity outside the established formal system - whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity - which is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives.³⁰

This section will explore the background to provision of education and training opportunities for adults and youth in South Africa, track the changes in terminology relating to ABET, explore policy and look at needs and context in the area.

BACKGROUND TO PROVISION OF ABET

One of the nine educational priorities identified by Minister of education Prof. Kader Asmal is that "We must break the back of illiteracy among adults and youth in five years."³¹ This call is informed by the fact that many people in South Africa have, for various socio-economic and political reasons, been deprived of an initial formal education or have received limited and inadequate education.

Census figures indicate that almost 20% of South Africans aged 20 years and over have received no formal schooling, while only 24.2% have some or complete primary education. In addition, approximately 40% of South Africans have received some secondary education, but only 6% have post-secondary qualifications³². Even where people have completed some form of secondary schooling, such schooling does not necessarily lead to further learning opportunities or to employment, as the following statistics cited in the recently released White Paper on Further Education and Training demonstrate that:

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁸ Zuma, S. (1997). 'The Report of the National Committee for Further Education' In *The Network*, November 1997, FAAE publication. p. 6.

²⁹ Ministry of Education (1998) *Education White Paper 4 - A Programme for the Transformation of Further Education and Training*, Government Gazette, Vol. 399. No. 19281. 25 September 1998. p. 14.

³⁰ Coombs, P.H., Proseer, R.C. and Ahemed, M. (1973). *New Paths to learning*: IECD. p. 10-11.

³¹ Asmal, K, (1999) *op cit*

³² Statistics South Africa (1998) *Census in Brief*. Pretoria.

2 million 16-27 year olds have completed nine or more years of schooling, but lack employment or meaningful opportunities to improve their knowledge, skills and qualifications.³³

Statistics such as these underscore why provision of education and training opportunities to adults and those youth who are not in the present schooling system is regarded as a national priority. For a long time, education for adults in South Africa has been marginalized through lack of access to resources, as well as lack of recognition in terms of its place in the broader education and training system. During apartheid, no coherent framework for provision or accreditation of education and training for adults, workers, and out-of-school youth existed. Where provision was offered by the state, it was generally fragmented and of poor quality. This meant that education provision for many South Africans was primarily made available by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). NGOs took the lead in offering literacy and numeracy programmes, skills and vocational training, materials development, and training for adult educators. Historically such endeavours on the part of NGOs have been grouped under the term 'adult education'.

The following definition of adult education adopted at UNESCO's Nairobi Conference in 1976 provides a useful umbrella term embodying several aspects of adult learning. Adult Education is defined as:

The entire body of organised educational processes, whatever the content, level, or method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools or colleges, and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications, or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced independent, social, economic, and cultural development.³⁴

The above definition points to the diversity and complexity of the vast assortment of activities included under the term adult education. The field of adult education has evolved around the world over the past decade. As this evolution has unfolded, different terms and phrases have been coined to describe the organizational framework, processes and outcomes in this terrain of adult and youth education. These include 'adult basic education', 'adult education and training', 'adult basic education and training', 'vocational education', 'education for out-of-school-youth', and 'further education and training'. As Hilary Diemont, from the Forum for the Advancement of Adult Education, notes,

Adult Education in its broadest definition encompasses - Adult Basic Education, Adult Education Centres, Adult literacy and numeracy work, Agricultural Extension, Civic Education, Community Development, Distance Education, Early years Training, Education of Adult Educators, Environmental Education, Health Education, Industrial and Commercial Training, Mass Media Education, Non-formal Training, Skills training Teacher In-service Education Worker Education ... these categories are not exhaustive or distinct. There is much overlapping.³⁵

³³ Ministry of Education. (1998) *Education White Paper 4 - A Programme for the Transformation of Further Education and Training*, Government Gazette, Vol. 399. No. 19281. 25 September 1998. p. 15.

³⁴ As cited in Roup, D (1998). *Networking in Adult Education in South Africa* Unpublished Research Report for the degree of Master of Education, WITS University, Johannesburg.

³⁵ Diemont, H. (1997). *A Skills Directory of Adult Education 1994/95*. p. 3.

In examining possible roles of a dedicated educational channel in these fields, it is useful to begin by exploring in some detail the different meanings of some of these terms and the educational activities they describe. We therefore examine the way in which these terms are currently used, to allow for meaningful engagement, before exploring issues and challenges facing education and training in these areas.

DESCRIBING THE TERMINOLOGY

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

An overview of policy and research documents in this field suggests that the term 'Adult Basic Education' (ABE) has traditionally been used to refer to a general basic education, much like schooling, which forms the basis for further educational and training opportunities.

A Survey of Adult Basic Education in South Africa in the 1990s commissioned by the Joint Education Trust (JET) shows how, over the last few years, the discourse of ABE has come to supersede that of literacy. The authors of this survey make reference to the National Adult Basic Education Conference of 12-14 November 1993, which emphasizes the formal, primary education equivalence side of ABE.³⁶

In 1997 the Directorate for Adult Education and Training, under the National Department of Education adopted the following definition of ABE:

Adult Basic Education refers to the **educational base** which individuals require to improve their life chances.³⁷

Some authors have extended this definition of ABE to include the target group, out-of-school-youth. For example, Van Zyl Slabbert *et al* (1994) put forward the following conceptualization:

Adult Basic Education, which aims at the elimination of illiteracy, is the **foundation for lifelong learning** for out-of-school and uneducated young people in particular.³⁸

Adult Education and Training

The term 'Adult Education and Training' is employed to overcome the traditional dichotomy between academic education and vocational training. As Walters *et al* write:

The term Adult Education and Training signals a move in some parts of the world away from adult education and vocational training as discrete entities. The former has been concerned mainly with community, political and cultural issues, whilst the latter has focused on work-related skills training. They have coexisted as two separate tracks barely communicating with one another. This move to integration

³⁶ Harley, A., Aitchison, J., Lyster, E., and Land, S. (1996). *A Survey of Adult Basic Education in South Africa in the 90s*. Johannesburg: Sached Books. p. 20.

³⁷ Department of Education, Directorate: Adult Education and Training. (1997). *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. (Final Draft). Pretoria. Department of Education. p. 11.

³⁸ Van Zyl Slabbert *et al*. (1994). *Youth in the New South Africa: Towards Policy Formulation* Main Report of the Co-operative Research Programme: South African Youth. Pretoria: HSRC. p. 116.

has also been signposted particularly in Europe with the use of the term ‘adult learning’.³⁹

This shift in conceptualization, away from adult education and vocational training as discrete entities, to integration has had a clear impact on the South African educational landscape, as the coining of the term, ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training) illustrates.

Adult Basic Education and Training

The term Adult Basic Education and Training represents the integration of education and training. French remarks that Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) is a uniquely South African term, which reflects the notion of *integration*.⁴⁰ This notion is a ‘political strategy to ensure foundational structures that will never allow an easy slippage back into the class system, the privileging/marginalising that happens in the split between education and training’.⁴¹

In the Department of Education’s draft policy document on *Adult Basic Education and Training in South Africa* (1997), ABET is defined as:

The general conceptual foundation towards lifelong learning and development, comprising of knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation and transformation applicable to a range of contexts. ABET is flexible, developmental and targeted at the specific needs of particular audiences and, ideally, provides access to nationally recognised certificates.⁴²

The Directorate for Adult Education and Training (1997), under the National Department of Education explains its rationale for the term ABE as follows:

Adult Basic Education refers to the **educational base** which individuals require to improve their life chances. Adult Basic Training refers to the foundational income-generating or occupational skills which individuals require for improving their living conditions. Together Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) implies the foundational knowledge, skills, understanding and abilities that are required for improved social and economic life.⁴³

NEW CONCEPTIONS

As indicated earlier, the field of adult and youth education in South Africa has undergone significant changes in the past decade. Traditionally, this field fell under the ambit of what was commonly referred to as ‘non-formal’ education. In the past, the term non-formal education was used to describe such diverse activities as community education, worker education, vocational education, and life-skills education, that is,

³⁹ Walter, S. (Ed.). (1997). *Globalization, Adult Education and Training: Impacts and Issues*. London & New York : ZED Books. p. 6.

⁴⁰ French, E. (1997) ‘Ways of Understanding Integration in the NQF’. In *South African Qualifications Bulletin*, Vol.1., No. 2, Nov/Dec 1997. p. 19.

⁴¹ *ibid*, p. 19.

⁴² Department of Education. (1997). *Adult Basic Education and Policy* (Draft). Pretoria. p. 11.

⁴³ Department of Education. Directorate: Adult Education and Training. (1997). *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. (Final Draft). Pretoria: Department of Education. p. 11.

any organised educational activity outside the established formal system - whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity - that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives.⁴⁴

Formal education on the other hand, was defined as education provided at or by a school, college, technikon, university, or any other institution with a view to certification. However, the distinction between 'formal' and 'non-formal' has become somewhat outdated, and has been replaced by a more holistic approach to education and training.

The shift away from simplistic non-formal/formal or education/training dichotomies to more holistic one is nowhere as evident as in the education firmament in South Africa. Historically, adult education in South Africa has been construed as literacy training, but with the changing political situation in South Africa a new discourse about adult education has evolved. As Aitchison puts it:

In South Africa in the 1990s a discourse about adult basic education (ABE) (and more latterly adult basic education **and** training (ABET)) replaced the 'non-formal' discourse of the 1980s in which the term literacy was dominant.⁴⁵

Walters, commenting on shifts in adult education, notes that

In 1994 there was a major shift in the adult education and training discourse. A shift from political and social movement discourse which highlights issues of equity and redress, to one which is driven by a training discourse which highlights economic development within a management framework.⁴⁶

Changing political circumstances have inevitably impacted on the understanding of what adult and youth education is or should be. Reflecting on the considerable shifts in this field, Bock remarks that the nature of these changes is 'reflected by the terminological shifts from "literacy" to "adult basic education" to "adult basic education and training"'.⁴⁷ This shift from Adult Basic Education (ABE) to Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) reflects a vision for an integrated education and training system for South Africa.

The evolution of these shifts can be traced back to the early 1990s, when educators in the labour movement, NGOs, academic institutions, the state, and the private sector took on adult education as a serious concern. With the prospect of a new democratic government in South Africa, the development of policy in the arena of adult education was a pertinent issue. In 1992, the Human Resources Committee of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) put forward proposals to integrate education and training, arguing that integrating these two areas was necessary to upgrade skills of workers, which was not possible without a basic education⁴⁸. In addition, this committee proposed that the state should be primarily responsible for the provision of adult education within a national framework. These issues influenced two major policy initiatives between 1991 and 1993, namely the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) report and the National Training Board (NTB)'s

⁴⁴Coombes, P.H., Proseer, R.C. and Ahemed, M. (1973). *New Paths to learning*: IECD. p. 10-11.

⁴⁵Aitchison, J. (1998). *Literacy and adult basic education and training in South Africa: A quick survey*. Background paper prepared for Interim Advisory ABET Board. p. 1.

⁴⁶Walters, S. (1996). 'Balancing Equality and Development in Universities after Apartheid: A focus on Adult and Continuing Education'. In *Communities and Their Universities*. p. 129.

⁴⁷Bock, Z and USWE. (1997). *USWE's development-driven ABET curriculum*. In ABET Journal, Vol.1, No. 3. p. 3.

⁴⁸COSATU Human Resources Committee. (1992). 'COSATU's Approach to Literacy and Adult Basic Education'. In McGregor, R. and McGregor, A. (Eds). *McGregor's Education Alternatives*. Cape Town: Juta

National Training Strategy Initiative.⁴⁹ Some of the central ideas put forward by the NTB's National Training Strategy Initiative (1994) included:

- Adult basic education should be more than just reading and writing, and should equip people to participate more fully in society
- The approach used should be competence-based
- There should be national standards and a national qualifications framework
- There should be a national core curriculum, with core subjects.⁵⁰

The NEPI report and NTB's National Training Strategy Initiative have influenced much of the present policy developments surrounding an integrated approach to education and training, and that of adult education in particular.⁵¹

RELEVANT POLICIES RELATING TO ABET

Following NEPI and NTB's National Training Strategy Initiative, a number of policies with a direct impact on adult education and training have since been formulated. In the Reconstruction and Development Programme of 1994, the government identified adult basic education and training as a key to human resource development. This effectively meant that education and training were being seen as vehicles to achieve equity, redress and development for people from previously disadvantaged communities.⁵² The department of Education's Policy Document on Adult Basic Education and Training (1996) also reiterated the government's desire to establish an ABET system along the principles of equality, redress, development, reconstruction, access, integration, partnership, sustainable use of resources, a flexible curriculum, outcomes-based standards of attainment, the recognition of prior learning and cost effectiveness.⁵³

The Department of Labour has also played an important role not only in pushing for the development of the National Qualifications Framework that would enable recognition of prior learning but also in formulating Skills Development Act and Skills Levy Act both of which relate to adult education. The Skills Levy Act will require companies to contribute 0,5% of their payroll to a National Skills Authority which will then be required to regulate the provision of education and training through Sector Education and Training Authorities. The minister of education is on record as proposing that the Act should also be used to raise funds for ABET.

NQF and SAQA

The implementation and establishment of the NQF, through SAQA provides a framework for a new, integrated approach to adult education and training. Within this framework, it is clear that adult education is now recognized on the NQF and as such, constitutes an integral part of South Africa's national education and training system. This means that the scope of educational policy and planning has broadened to

⁴⁹Harley, A. et al.. (1996). *A Survey of adult basic education in South Africa in the 90s*. Johannesburg: Sached Books.

⁵⁰From the NTB's National Training Strategy Initiative Preliminary Report (1994), as quoted in Aitchison, J. et al. (1996). p. 163.

⁵¹See Gamble, J. and Walters, S. (1997). 'ETDP: Passing Fad or New Identity?' In Walters, S. (Ed.) *Globalization, Adult Education and Training: Impacts and Issues*. London & New York: ZED Books.

⁵² Motala S, Vally S and Modiba M (July 1999). "A Call to Action" A Review of Minister Asmal's Educational Priorities in *Quarterly Review of Education and Training in South Africa*, University of the Witwatersrand, EPU

⁵³ Cited in Motala S, Vally S, and Modiba M, *op cit*

encompass adult basic education and training . The recognition of ABET on the NQF was informed by three main influences:

- ABET provision generally lacks accountability and institutional structures which can be assumed in schooling.
- ABET could be further marginalised if not included.
- important steps have been taken by various industry training boards to link substantive benefits to a training and education framework at ABET levels. This needed to be recognised within the NQF.⁵⁴

Thus, the provision and accreditation of adult education is now part of the state's hierarchical educational framework. To this end, an Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) directorate was formed.

The Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training

The department of education's Directorate for Adult Education and Training formally adopted a Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training, in October 1997. The plan is

the result of an initiative by the national department of education and the Directorate for Adult education and Training in particular. More importantly, it represents the culmination of stakeholder negotiations and of the cementing of partnership relationship between government and civil society.⁵⁵

The *Multi-Year Implementation Plan* is a four-year plan, consisting of two phases. The first phase - to run in 1998 and 1999 - aims at increasing the numbers of learners and focusing on curricular, assessment, and quality assurance issues. The second phase - to run 2000 and 2001 - 'aims at the mass mobilisation of learners so that the overall target of some 2,5 million learners is reached by the year 2001'.⁵⁶

The *Multi-Year Implementation Plan* is described as the 'first comprehensive and inclusive multi-year plan for bringing about quality and quantity improvements in the delivery of adult learning'.⁵⁷ The aim of the plan is thus

to provide general (basic) education and training to adults for access to further education and training and employment. That is, to increase the quality and quantity of relevant and appropriate learning and learning services to adults and out-of-school youth who have been unable to access adequate education and training in the past.⁵⁸

As part of the process of bringing about 'quality and quantity improvements' in the adult education sector, the Directorate has situated ABET within the NQF framework to ensure that learners are provided with the necessary opportunities to engage in further learning and/or employment opportunities. Hence the directorate's vision is to 'link the adult basic and training sector to the further education and training sector'.⁵⁹ This is represented as follows:

⁵⁴ SAQA Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1 May/June 1997, pp.5-6

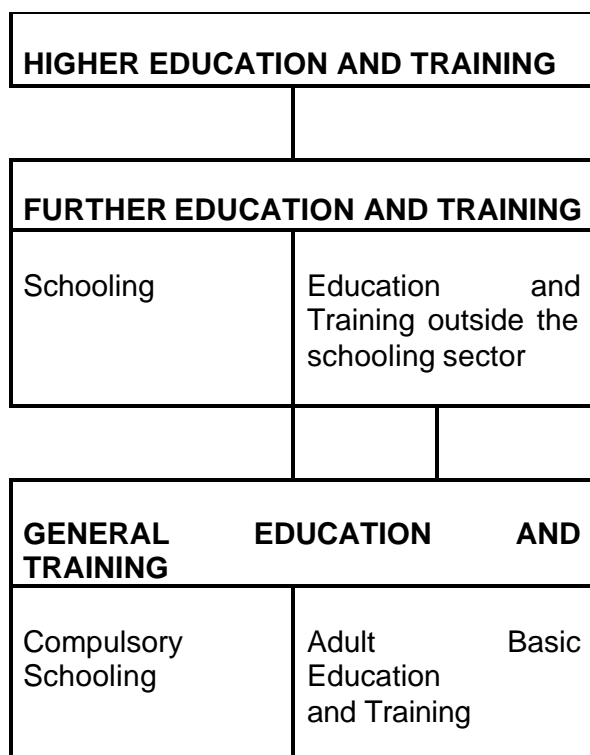
⁵⁵ Department of Education, 1997. Directorate: Adult education and Training. A national Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult education and Training: Provision and Accreditation. Final Draft. p.14

⁵⁶ *ibid.* p. vi.

⁵⁷ *ibid.* p. 14.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. v.

⁵⁹ Department of Education, 1997. Directorate: Adult Education and Training. *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation.* Final Draft. p.6.



Source: Directorate: Adult Education and Training. *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation.*

The above conceptualization ‘is based on the idea that adult basic education and training is the educational foundation for further education and training and enables learners to engage in further learning and employment opportunities.’⁶⁰ It is a conceptualization that aims to provide adult learners with a general education which recognizes all forms of prior learning and provides for a learner’s advancement through the ABET sub-levels.

In terms of the NQF framework, ABET is placed in the first NQF level, which comprises the General Education and Training band. This is equivalent to the period of formal compulsory schooling, and is thus seen as a standard or ‘benchmark’, which will accommodate an ABET qualification for youth and adult learners. The ABET sub-levels one, two, three and four correspond to Grades three, five, seven, and nine respectively.

The Directorate sees the ABET curriculum as consisting of three main components: fundamentals, core contextual areas, and specialized or elective areas. The core contextual areas incorporate the six curriculum 2005 learning areas other than mathematical sciences and languages, that is: technology, arts and culture, life orientation, human social sciences, management and economic sciences.

In order to achieve its goals of increased provision and access, the Directorate has adopted a position where face-to-face instruction with print instructional and information media will be the dominant form of delivery at ABET levels 1 to 3 and appropriate methods of distance education with strong learner support

⁶⁰ *ibid.* p. 6.

mechanisms will be developed and implemented from the General Education and Training Certificate level.⁶¹

This has definite implications for educational broadcasting in supporting educational activities and programmes within the field of adult education. While, as the ABET Directorate contends, 'face-to-face instruction with print instructional and information media will be the dominant form of delivery at ABET levels 1 to 3'. This of course does not imply that educational broadcasting service will have no role to play at these levels. Rather, the nature and form of any broadcasting or technological intervention aimed at any of the ABET levels will have to be carefully considered, taking cognisance of the target audience, learning goals, and appropriateness of medium, consistency with aims and identified target group.

The Directorate has identified particular groups as priorities for mobilizing and enrolling learners in adult basic education and training programmes. These are:

- *Disadvantaged women*

Women who have been unable to access or complete primary schooling and who are unemployed or under-employed, and who are over the age of 30 years. Special attention will be placed on women living in rural areas and squatter settlements.

- *Women with special needs*

Women who have been unable to access or complete primary schooling, who are over the age of 30 years and who have been or are in prison, in shelters on farms, and the like.

- *Disadvantaged youth*

Persons between the ages of 15 and 30 years who have been unable to access or complete primary schooling.

- *Youth with special needs*

Persons between the ages of 15 and 30 years who have been or are in prison, places of safety, in shelters, on farms, etc. and who have been unable to access or complete primary schooling.

- *Persons with disabilities capable of independent learning*

Persons with a disability who have been unable to access or complete primary schooling for reasons other than the nature of the disability itself. For example, life circumstances, inaccessibility of institutions, lack of suitable resources and unfriendly institutions.⁶²

The *Multi-Year Plan* is informed by government's commitment to lifelong learning and a need to co-ordinate different activities and initiatives within the broad spectrum of adult education. The concept of lifelong learning is one which sees learning as a process that continues throughout an individual's life and in different contexts. The concept of lifelong learning has influenced and permeated approaches to adult education. As Amutabi *et al* state:

The concept of learning throughout life has emerged as one of the keys to the next century. It has helped to put the learner, rather than the educator or practitioner, at the centre of policy or and implementation. It also draws attention

⁶¹ Department of Education, 1997. Directorate: Adult Education and Training. *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. Final Draft. p. 84.

⁶² *ibid.* p. 11.

to all the ways in which adults learn at different points in their lives outside recognized educational institutions.⁶³

Adoption of the principles of lifelong learning and recognition of prior learning are integral to the proposed plans to link ABET with further education and employment opportunities within the National Qualifications Framework. One of the key objectives of the *Multi-Year Plan* is that it must resonate ‘with the broad social and developmental imperatives of the country at national and provincial levels and local levels’.⁶⁴ In this regard, it is contiguous to proposals contained in the *Skills Development Act*. This act represents a new approach to education, training, and skills development in the national economic sector.

Subsequent to the Multi-year Implementation Plan the Adult Education and Training Directorate has generated numerous documents relating to this sector. The following table details some of these and has been included to demonstrate additional developments since 1997 and serve as a source for further reading.

Additional Documents Generated by the Directorate: Adult Education and Training⁶⁵

1. Draft National Regulatory Framework	1997
2. Policy Document on Adult Basic Education and Training	1997
3. Multi-year Implementation Plan	1997
4. Provincial Multi-year Implementation Plans	1998
5. Draft Unit Standards for Communication/ Language and Numeracy/ Mathematics ABET levels 1 - 3	1998
6. Practitioner Training Providers Audit	1998
7. Learning Support Materials Audit	1998
8. National OBE Training Manual	1998
9. National Assessment Training Manual	1998
10. Needs Analysis (Eastern Cape and Northern Province)	1998
11. Feasibility Study (Eastern Cape and Northern Province)	1998
12. Interim Strategy for Monitoring and Evaluation	1998
13. Draft RPL Framework Document	1998
14. Constitution of the Interim ABET Advisory Body (IAAB)	1998
15. Draft Standards for ABET Facilitators (Educators)	1998
16. Draft Unit Standards for the 8 Learning Areas, NQF level 1	1999
17. Draft Unit Standards for Agriculture and SMME, NQF level 1	1999
18. Assessment Action Plan	1999
19. Agriculture and SMME Assessment Exemplars	1999
20. Qualifications and Assessment Systems document (including level descriptors, learnerships and GET qualification proposal)	1999
21. Learning Programme Exemplars	1999
22. National Learning Programme Training Manual	1999
23. National Learning Support Materials Training Manual	1999
24. Assessment Policy for Grades 0 –9 and ABET	1999
25. Administrative Guide for Placement Tools	1999
26. Placement Tools for 7 Learning Areas	1999
27. Social Mobilisation and Advocacy Strategy for ABET	1999
28. Provincial Governance Training Manual	1999/ 2000
29. Ikhwelo Newsletter, Issue No. 1	1999

⁶³ Amutabi et al (1997). ‘Introduction’. In Walters, S. (Ed.) *Globalization, Adult Education and Training: Impacts and Issues*. London: Zed Books. p. 11.

⁶⁴ Department of Education. Directorate: Adult Education and Training. *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. October 1997. p. 143.

⁶⁵ List submitted by Noel Daniels, October 1999.

30. Ikhwelo Newsletter, Issue No. 2	
31. Unit Standards for the 8 Learning Areas, ABET levels	In process
32. Unit Standards for Tourism, Ancillary Healthcare, Hospitality, Information Communications Technology and Agroprocessing	In process
33. National Project Management Training Manual	In process
34. Learning Support Materials Audit update	In process
35. Learning Support Materials evaluation	In process
36. Curriculum Framework Document	In process
37. Learning Programme Design Handbook	In process
38. Education Management Information System Reports	In process
39. Impact study of the application of the cascade model	In process
40. Others? Materials developed at provincial level	

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

It is generally accepted that environmental, health, and other socio-economic issues cannot be resolved without the active participation and involvement of citizens. Therefore, ongoing education and training focusing on human resource development to assure social and economic development is crucial.

The ABET Directorate, in its *Multi Year Implementation Plan*, describes changes that the adult basic education and training sector has undergone as ‘bringing together efforts aimed at community development, vocational and technical training, literacy and basic education with popular education programmes.’⁶⁶ In addition, it contends that the key objective of adult education is that it must resonate ‘with the broad social and developmental imperatives of the country at national and provincial levels and local levels’.⁶⁷ Similarly the National Youth Commission, in its policy document, stresses the need for an integrated approach to developing skills and capacities in young men and women, within the broader context of social and economic reconstruction and development. In the case of the *Skills Development Act*, it is clear that the approach to education and skills development is one which seeks to promote economic growth and social development through a focus on education, training and skills development. These three policy documents can be seen as contributing towards and providing a framework for an integrated human resource development system that seeks to promote economic and social development through a focus on education, training, and skills development.

This integrated approach is in many ways new. Jeanne Gamble and Shirley Walters maintain that ‘the worlds of education, training and development have traditionally been far apart’,⁶⁸ and that a shift towards an integrated approach is neither easy nor comfortable. The traditional notion of adult education as ‘literacy’ and ‘numeracy’ has given way to one which places adult education within other social and economic development strategies. Walters states that, during 1985,

⁶⁶ Department of Education, Directorate: Adult Education and Training (1997). *A National Multi -Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. Final Draft. p. 20.

⁶⁷ Department of Education. Directorate: Adult Education and Training. *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. October 1997. p. 143.

⁶⁸ Gamble, J. and Walters, S. (1997). ‘ETDP: Passing Fad or New Identity?’ In Walters (Ed.) *Globalization, Adult Education and Training*. ZED Publishers. p.123.

the primary reference point for adult educators was the political struggle against apartheid ...Our prime concern was adult education as part of a broad movement for democratic transformation.⁶⁹

This situation is markedly different in the post-1994 period, where 'the field of adult education is being driven by a range of factors, including social reconstruction and economic development'.⁷⁰ Walters continues:

The division between economic and community development is problematic, and it is imperative that adult educators and trainers take up the challenge of developing an integrated approach which addresses personal, economic and community development.⁷¹

A review of policy documents in the education and training arena, and the field of adult education in particular, suggests that this challenge of developing 'an integrated approach which addresses personal, economic and community development' is being taken up, albeit in most instances primarily still at the level of policy. In combination with a range of other agencies, then, there is a very important role for educational broadcasting helping to convert this policy into meaningful practice. This might include providing support for ABET learning programmes and/or undertaking advocacy and mobilization. As the Abet Directorate puts it:

Over and above the use of broadcast media for ABET learning and learning support materials, there is an imperative to use the public broadcast media to encourage learners to enter the system and to place ABET on the national agenda and keep it in the national consciousness.⁷²

The extent to which an integrated approach to adult education, which attempts to meet personal, economic and social needs, is manifested in practice will depend, in the first instance, on inter-sectoral collaboration and partnerships. This has already begun with the establishment of the Adult Education and Training Chamber, which comprises representatives from various government departments, organized labour and organized business, community organizations, higher education institutions, education providers, and national practitioner bodies. Similar developments are under way in the youth and skills development sectors.

Linked to this inter-sectoral approach is the question of focus of ABET programmes aimed at adults and youth. Zannie Bock cautions against an 'ABET curriculum driven by the needs of the formal economy alone'. She cites the following current employment figures to support this:

About 50% of the total labour force of 15 million in South Africa, is in the Small, Medium and Micro-Enterprise (SMME) sector, including informal and subsistence (Department of Trade and Industry, 1995) and the SMME sector is growing at three to four times the rate of the formal economy (Burroughs, 1994); roughly 40% of the population is in the unemployed or subsistence sectors (only 60% is in formalemployment).⁷³

⁶⁹ Walters, S. (1996). 'Balancing Equality and Development in Universities after Apartheid: A focus on Adult and Continuing Education'. In Elliot, J. et al (Eds). *Communities and Their Universities*. p. 129.

⁷⁰ *ibid.* p. 130.

⁷¹ *ibid.* p. 130.

⁷² Department of Education, Directorate: Adult Education and Training (1997). *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. Final Draft. p. 144.

⁷³ Bock, S. and USWE. (1997). 'USWE's development-driven ABET curriculum'. In *ABET Journal*, Vol. 1, No.3, 1997. p. 7.

Bock, therefore, goes on to argue thus that:

The overwhelming majority of those in need of ABET therefore fall outside the core manufacturing workforce. For this reason, we believe that it is crucial that ABET curricula provide the kinds of knowledge and skills that will encourage and sustain people in the creative pursuit of economic independence.⁷⁴

Education and training programmes designed for adults and youth (employed and unemployed) must therefore be conceived in a broader context. If ABET is to play a role in the broader social, political and economic context, then literacy and numeracy skills, while essential, will have to be seen as constituting one element of what might be needed for social and economic development. This is particularly true of adult education programmes in an industrial setting, and it is here where the implementation of the Skills Development Act holds both significant promise and challenge for restructuring adult education within an integrated human resource development system.

An integrated and comprehensive approach to education, training, and development is one which seeks to enable individuals to acquire and apply the knowledge and skills to contribute to improving their social and economic conditions. Thus, educational activities and opportunities for adults and youth intersect the fields of literacy, language and numeracy, vocational skills, democracy and citizenship, gender awareness, primary health care, and other similar areas.

Limited access to and inadequacies of the former education system and the problems that persist into the present pose certain challenges for those wishing to provide educational opportunities for those people who fall outside of the conventional schooling and higher education systems. This necessitates an exploration of the issues and challenges facing this spectrum of adults and youth.

Some Key Challenges

‘The shift from being part of the anti-apartheid movement to being part of the process of reconstruction and development’⁷⁵ presents significant challenges for those working in the field of adult and youth education. The challenges have been described as having to address the tension between the limited time and the often difficult contexts of adult education and the need to provide a foundation of knowledge and skills which will give adults access to jobs and further education and training if required. [Adult education and training] has to balance the needs of industry against those of the development of informal sectors. It has to address the needs of both the employed workforce and the unemployed.⁷⁶

For the ABET Directorate, one of the major challenges facing the Adult Basic Education and Training sector is ‘to ensure that it retains its significance and importance as part of reconstruction and development and as a basic human right.’⁷⁷ In addition the ABET directorate has identified the following challenges facing those working in the sector.

- the planning and development of delivery programmes;

⁷⁴ *ibid.* pp. 7-8.

⁷⁵ Walters, S. (1996). p. 130.

⁷⁶ Bock, S. and USWE. (1997). ‘USWE’s development-driven ABET curriculum’. In *ABET Journal*, Vol. 1, No.3, 1997. pp.6-7.

⁷⁷ Department of Education, Directorate: Adult Education and Training (1997). *A National Multi -Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. Final Draft. p. 19.

- the implementation of programmes so that they can reach the target audience;
- bringing about coherence and cohesion in a sector which is increasingly facing fragmentation, disintegration and disillusionment.⁷⁸

Thus a major challenge is to find ways of expanding ABET provision while increasing meaningful access to it. A national survey, conducted by the University of Natal, estimated that in 1995/1996 there were about 335 500 participants in adult basic education programmes, across the different sectors: state, companies, NGOs, parastatals, municipalities, and religious organizations.⁷⁹ If one adds this to census figures cited earlier, which indicate that 20% (about 4 million) South Africans aged 20 and over have received no schooling, then it is clear why the expansion of provision and increasing access are primary concerns.

Need to expand ABET provision has resulted in a number of campaigns launched particularly for this mission. Drawing largely from a plan developed by the National Literacy Coalition (NLC) in its Thousand Learner Project, the Department of Education launched the Inthuteng Campaign in 1996. The campaign called for the efficient delivery of high quality ABET programmes by a multiplicity of stakeholders from public, non-governmental and private sectors. Its ultimate target was 10 000 learners per province. The campaign experienced serious problems relating to lack of personnel and facilities to implement the programmes in provinces, some governing bodies exercised their rights to deny adult learners access to classrooms, training of teachers was short and ineffective.⁸⁰

Related to the issue of delivery and access, is that of meeting the needs of those individuals within the spectrum of adult education. However, within this spectrum, there are different categories of individuals with diverse sets of needs. Different organizations and interest groups have employed different categories to describe the target audience. The ABET Directorate, for example, describes the target audience as being 'extremely broad in character and can be disaggregated by age, sex age group, employment status and province (to name just some of the variables).'⁸¹ The National Youth Policy identified the following priority target groups as demanding specific attention in terms of education and training interventions: unemployed young people; out-of-school youth; rural young men and women; young people in correctional facilities; young people who are disabled; and young men and women with HIV/AIDS.⁸² Categories such as these are not mutually exclusive, and merely provide indicators of different target groups, which can then facilitate processes of meeting their needs. So, for example, the NYC's proposed strategy to meet the needs of out-of-school youth includes pre-employment training, vocational training and skills development, and remedial courses to enable these young women and men to return to school.⁸³

In addition to its focus on education and training, the National Youth Commission has identified economic participation, youth employment and unemployment, youth health, and crime and violence⁸⁴ as key strategic areas for intervention. In order to tackle the related

⁷⁸ Department of Education, Directorate: Adult Education and Training (1997). *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. Final Draft. p. 28.

⁷⁹ Source: Harley et al. (1996). *A Survey of Adult Basic Education in South Africa in the 90s*. Johannesburg: SACHED Books. p. 54.

⁸⁰ Motlale S, Vally S, and Modiba M, (July 1999) *op cit*

⁸¹ Department of Education, Directorate: Adult Education and Training (1997). *A National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. Final Draft. p.62.

⁸² National Youth Commission. (1997). *National Youth Policy*. Pretoria. p. 30.

⁸³ *ibid.* p.30.

⁸⁴ National Youth Commission. (1997). *National Youth Policy*. Pretoria. p. 8.

issues of economic participation of young people and youth unemployment, the National Youth Policy contains the following proposals: school-based career guidance; youth career guidance centres; and a National Youth Employment Strategy. The latter will seek to use the proposed *learnership* strategy (as articulated in the Skills Development Act), as well as to develop specific programmes, with other stakeholders, ‘designed to address the particular employment and recruitment needs of young people’.⁸⁵

The challenges surrounding delivery, access, and meeting the needs of identified target groupings are well captured in the ABET Directorate’s vision for adult education. It states that in reflecting the changes that the terrain of adult basic education has undergone, this sector has to ‘address four key growth and development concerns at both individual and community levels’:

- developing the capacity of adults and out-of-school youth to understand the complex reality in which they live so as to enable them to identify and apply the most relevant and appropriate ways of responding to this reality;
- creating critical and participative citizens. This requires that the learning system has to incorporate areas of learning which address “ethics, autonomy, participation, administration and control, information management, local development, cultural development, human rights, and the environment” ;
- opening up and laying the foundations for further education and training at every level and in every aspect of personal and social life and development;
- improving the quality of life of the large numbers of people who are not able to satisfy their basic needs (through enabling them to access or create employment opportunities).⁸⁶

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Any attempt to define the spectrum of further education and adult basic education and training and youth education that falls outside of conventional schooling and higher education system presents difficulties. This is not only because of the diversity of the constituency falling within this spectrum, but also because of the complexity of the issues and challenges. The world of learning outside of the conventional schooling and higher education systems is marked by its close ties with occupational training, skills upgrading, community-based programmes, and work orientation programmes. However, it is also concerned with lifelong learning and the development of autonomy, responsibility, and capacity of people and communities to deal with the changes taking place in the economy and in society as a whole. To this end, there is an institutional framework in place to facilitate the implementation of national and localized strategies aimed at enhancing and developing skills and meeting the education and training needs of adults and youth.

A contextualized and multi-faceted understanding, which recognizes the link between education, training, and social and economic development, has replaced the traditional understanding of adult education. It is clear that the needs of youth and adults are diverse, and can only be met through a variety of delivery systems and partnerships. The complexity of the adult and youth educational terrain calls for effective cooperation, coordination, and

⁸⁵ *ibid.* p. 39.

⁸⁶ Department of Education, Directorate: Adult Education and Training (1997). *A National Multi -Year Implementation Plan for Adult Education and Training: Provision and Accreditation*. Final Draft. p. 20.

partnerships between the state, public, private and community sectors. As stated in the Hamburg Declaration on Adult learning:

The new concept of youth and adult education presents a challenge to existing practices because it calls for effective networking within the formal and non-formal systems, and for innovation and more creativity and flexibility. Such challenges should be met by new approaches to adult education within the concept of learning through life. Promoting learning, using mass media and local publicity, and offering impartial guidance are responsibilities for governments, social partners and providers. The ultimate goals should be the creation of a learning society committed to social justice and general well-being.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ The Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning. (1997). In *ABET Journal*. Vol. 1. No.2. p. 5.