

Introduction

BACKGROUND TO THIS RESEARCH REPORT

The concept of establishing a dedicated educational broadcasting service has been an informal feature of South Africa's public discourse for many years. It also has many policy antecedents, most notably the Department of Education's Technology-Enhanced Learning Investigation and its Educational Broadcasting Plan, which laid the groundwork for a partnership between the Department of Education and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). In terms of this research report, however, it first became an issue of policy focus in February 1998, when both the Ministries of Communication and Education committed themselves to exploring the feasibility of establishing such a service at an Educational Broadcasting Conference organized by the SABC.

The process of arranging for the research exercise that has culminated in this research report began in late 1998, when the Department of Education made arrangements with USAID to support a research project. After several consultative and negotiation processes, the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) established a contractual relationship with USAID to complete this research project, the terms of which are outlined below.

Simultaneously, however, the Department of Communication initiated its own process of tendering for a research project into the feasibility of establishing a dedicated educational broadcasting service. This project was soon brought into the framework of the growing relationship between the Departments of Communication and Education, with the result that both Departments agreed to create a two-phase project, in terms of which this research project would constitute the second phase. The terms of the Department of Communications tender were subsequently re-worked at a public tender meeting, with agreement being reached in that meeting on the following terms of reference for the first phase:

1. Description of international best practice in educational broadcasting;
2. Financial modelling database;
3. Analysis of potential sources of income for a dedicated educational broadcasting channel/service;
4. Technical and financial information on broadcasting in South Africa; and
5. Preliminary analysis of broadcasting initiatives in South Africa.

The tender for this research work was awarded to Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC), and completion of the first phase was originally set for late April, 1999.

For a range of reasons, the final deadline for this first phase work was shifted quite extensively, with the result that SAIDE was only formally handed a copy of the PWC research report in mid August. Given the urgency of the both Departments, SAIDE agreed to complete its research work by the end of October, although this did mean that the late date of hand-over of the first phase research report has significantly curtailed the time that we have had available to complete this research exercise. Essentially, in two and a half months, we completed a project that we had, in terms of our contract with USAID, estimated would take four months.

The process has also been significantly complicated by splitting between two managing organizations – PWC and SAIDE – two phases of a single project. SAIDE had particularly

developed an expectation that we would be able to rely on the first-phase research outputs as building blocks for our phase two work, but discovered, on perusing the first-phase research report, that this would not be possible. An independent assessment of the first-phase report, prepared for SAIDE by the general manager of Teleac-NOT in the Netherlands (attached as appendix fourteen), provides some clear reasons for this. The consequence of this was that we have had to conduct the phase-two work as if it were an entirely separate research project. We have also had to put energy into unravelling the consequences of some prematurely reached conclusions contained in the PWC report.

Despite these two setbacks, SAIDE remains confident that this report fully serves the purposes originally intended by the Departments of Communication and Education. Below we present an outline of the objectives of the research exercise, indicating where in the report the different objectives of the report have been fulfilled.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The table below lays out the objectives of this research exercise, as contained in SAIDE's contractual agreements with USAID (these agreements were formulated in direct consultation with both the Departments of Education and Communication).

OUTPUT	LOCATION IN REPORT
<i>Output One</i>	
The recipient will provide a report with a detailed analysis of the impact the educational broadcasting channel/service will make on the implementation of government programmes, which intends to foster human resource development in general and improve the conditions for teaching and learning in particular. This report must clearly identify priority audiences; their education and training needs and propose ways in which these may be supported by an educational broadcasting channel/service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government programmes, priority audiences, and education and training needs outlined in chapters one and two (with more detailed descriptions contained in appendices one, two, and three) • Detailed analysis and proposals of broadcasting service support contained in chapters six and seven, summarized in chapter eight (with more detailed descriptions contained in appendices four and five)
<i>Output Two</i>	
The recipient will provide models of both local and international examples of best educational broadcasting practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons summarized in chapter four, models provided in appendices nine, twelve, and thirteen

OUTPUT	LOCATION IN REPORT
The recipient will provide a synopsis of an appropriate education mandate, derived from the needs analysis conducted and including an appraisal of access to different technologies in across the full geographic spread of South Africa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education mandate described in chapters one and two, applied to educational broadcasting service in chapters six and seven (summarized in chapter eight) • Appraisal of access to different technologies contained in chapter three (with more detailed descriptions provided in appendices eight, ten, fifteen, and twenty-two)
The recipient will provide an organizational structure or model for the proposed educational channel/service which correlates with the cost, funding required, proposed research and development operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational structure outlined in chapter nine, funding, costs, and income described in chapter ten (with more detailed presentations in appendices seventeen to twenty-two)
The recipient will identify potential sources of income that will impact on the sustainability of the channel/service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources of income discussed in chapter ten (with more detailed presentations in appendices seventeen to twenty-two)
The recipient will provide a five (5) year business plan with projected expenditure and income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan presented in chapters nine and ten (with more detailed presentations in appendices seventeen to twenty-two)
The recipient will propose strategies focused on building educational sustainability of the channel/service. This must include strategies for local educational content development and programme assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals presented in chapters six, seven, eight, nine and ten
The recipient will develop strategies for the end-user support. This includes ensuring that equitable access by all South African is achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies presented in chapters seven, nine, and ten
The recipient will make recommendations on the language policy of the channel/service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations presented in chapter eleven
The recipient will develop a communication strategy for the educational channel/service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy presented in chapter nine
The recipient will outline potential markets in Africa and internationally for the channel/service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential markets mentioned in chapters six, seven, and nine

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

To complete this report we drew on a number of research methods. We describe these in broad terms below.

Broad Consultation

Consultation has been a key component of the research process for this project. We used three methods for sharing the ideas contained in this report with a broad group of interested people. We presented the initial ideas at Telematics for African Development consortium meeting on the 22nd September 1999 and again at the Millenium Minds conference hosted by SchoolNet SA and the Western Cape Schools Network in Cape Town at the end of September. Through these presentations, we invited questions and comment from all in attendance and held numerous informal discussions, all of which helped to refine and shape the ideas presented. Following the presentations we invited interested participants to join a distribution list through which we circulated draft chapters of the report. Sixty people requested copies of the chapters and many have commented on them - significantly adding to and refining the ideas presented. This was particularly valuable in strengthening the arguments presented, as queries comments and suggestions were taken seriously and have been integrated into the report as it now stands. We have also consulted the Head of Teleac-NOT in the Netherlands and some of his colleagues throughout the process, which has added an important international dimension to the research process.

Departmental Meetings

As this research is of relevance to both the departments of Education and Communication, we have liaised with and discussed the emerging ideas with representatives from both departments on an ongoing basis. We held regular meetings at which we discussed progress on the project and presented and debated ideas as they took shape. The same representatives were also included in a reference group formed for the study.

Reference Group

We formed a reference group for this research work at the outset of the project. People involved in educational broadcasting as well as in networking and technology provision were invited to join this group which met thrice during the process. Each reference group meeting made a seminal contribution to shaping the ideas presented in this report.¹

Model Development Meetings

We developed these options and models through the series of consultation processes described above. As the various models and options were refined and described we met with numerous individuals on a one-to-one basis. Each iteration was further refined through articulating the ideas to different audiences and discussing the concepts in the SAIDE research team. Feedback on the models was solicited verbally and via e-mail and comments received were included to further refine the options. The head of Teleac-NOT contributed specific input on the different organizational structures for educational broadcasting initiatives evident in international practice. This is presented in appendix thirteen.

¹ Reference group participants are detailed in the Acknowledgements section.

Consolidating Existing SAIDE Research Reports

Much of the research presented in this report has been drawn from a range of SAIDE research reports conducted over at least a five year period. These lessons have been refined and synthesised over a number of years of working with South African organizations using technologies in education. In particular they have draw on SAIDE's research into

- Information and Communications Technology (ICT) use in South African education originally conducted while investigating the use of satellite and Internet technologies to support the professional development of educators for Multichoice,
- Analysis of non-governmental organizations supporting the use of ICTs in South African schools conducted for the Education Policy Unit at the University of the Western Cape,
- Research into teachers and ICT use in South Africa conducted for SABC Education,
- Participation in various policy and technology related processes (including the Technology Enhance Learning Initiative processes, and the white paper on Education, the National Teacher Audit, the Presidential Educational Initiative)

To illustrate, the international lessons pertaining to educational broadcasting presented in chapter four have been consolidated from international research conducted for the SABC in focusing on schools, adult education and youth development and technology choices.² During these SAIDE research projects, numerous examples of educational broadcasting initiatives were collected through several e-mail questionnaires distributed to broadcasters and from secondary sources. These were compiled into country by country descriptions, for each of the above projects. This research consolidated these examples into a single appendix (appendix nine), and slightly extended some of them, based on additional contact with broadcasters and more secondary information. The lessons presented have been based on trends identified for the SABC projects and are based on the country-by-country examples.

Drawing on Secondary Sources

Besides using existing SAIDE documentation we also drew extensively on other secondary sources, as is evident from the bibliography. Secondary sources were used particularly in chapters one two and three to map out the South African context in relation to education policy, needs and technology infrastructure. For the policy overview for example, we adopted a sector by sector approach to this task focusing on understanding the National Qualifications framework and drawing on secondary sources relevant to schooling, further education, adult basic education and training and higher education to map the context of education in South Africa. We drew on the policy documents themselves as well as commentaries on these that have been published through publications like *the South African Quarterly Review of Education*, *Edusource Data News*, and various educational journals and print media articles. In the technology overview, we drew on SAIDE's work in developing the technology module for the Technology-Enhanced Learning Initiative decision-making framework and work conducted for the SABC into educational technologies. As the technology road-map is constantly changing, this was augmented with additional information to describe the technologies, understand their educational applications and present a current picture of South African technology infrastructure. To do this we referred to existing telecommunications infrastructure, national infrastructure initiatives, networking and information sharing initiatives, and international projects. This drew primarily on secondary sources and SAIDE's

² SAIDE (1998) *A School-Based Educational Broadcasting Service for South Africa: Strategic Plan developed for the South African Broadcasting Corporation*, and SAIDE (1999) *Educational Interventions in the Field of Adult and Youth Development: Scenarios for SABC Education*, and SAIDE (1999) *Educational Technologies Strategic Choices for SABC Education*.

involvement in many of these processes. In some instances, personal communication with suppliers of educational technologies and technology service providers informed the process.

Interviews

As mentioned much of the research presented in this report has drawn on existing SAIDE work. While extensive research interviews were not conducted specifically for this project, the research has drawn on a number of interview processes for related projects that have informed it. For example, the scan of ICT use in South African Education presented in appendix five, is a consolidation of case study descriptions generated by SAIDE through a series of approximately fifty structured interviews with individuals involved in the use of technologies to support education in South Africa. As another example, the context of adult education and the needs identified were generated through a series of forty-five structured interviews with people involved in adult education in South Africa. And as mentioned above, the international broadcasting lessons and examples have been compiled from series of e-mail interviews with educational broadcasters around the world.

Commissioning Discrete Research Tasks

In areas where SAIDE did not have the requisite expertise to conduct research in a particular area in the required timeframes, we commissioned discrete tasks to individuals or organizations who did. The CSIR contributed discrete components in two areas - a focus on key cost considerations for buildings and a focus on elements of and related costs for education cluster environments. Owen Roberts from Kearsney College, contributed a short section on ideas on administration and management training required in South African schools, and Helene Perold, from Helene Perold and Associates, compiled a situational analysis of educational radio in South Africa.

Building the Costing Model

Again, this work has drawn on SAIDE's intellectual capital accumulated through working with a range of educational organizations to costs aspects of their work and the technologies they use in support of this. Specifically, many elements of the costing model have been identified through engagement with educational broadcasters (Teleac-NOT, SABC educational television and radio) and SchoolNet South Africa, and various South African universities.³ The following external contributions were used to develop the costing tools and models:

- Work conducted by Boutek at the CSIR into considerations for buildings when integrating technologies into them. A document summarising key cost considerations for buildings has been included in appendix eleven.
- Work conducted by Mikomtek at the CSIR into costing technology elements of educational cluster environments. This contribution has been included in appendix eight.
- Expertise in and tools for costing television broadcasting provided by KPMG.

³ SAIDE has conducted costing exercises for (and continues to work with) University of Natal (Durban), University of the Western Cape, University of Natal, University of Cape Town and University of the Witwatersrand.