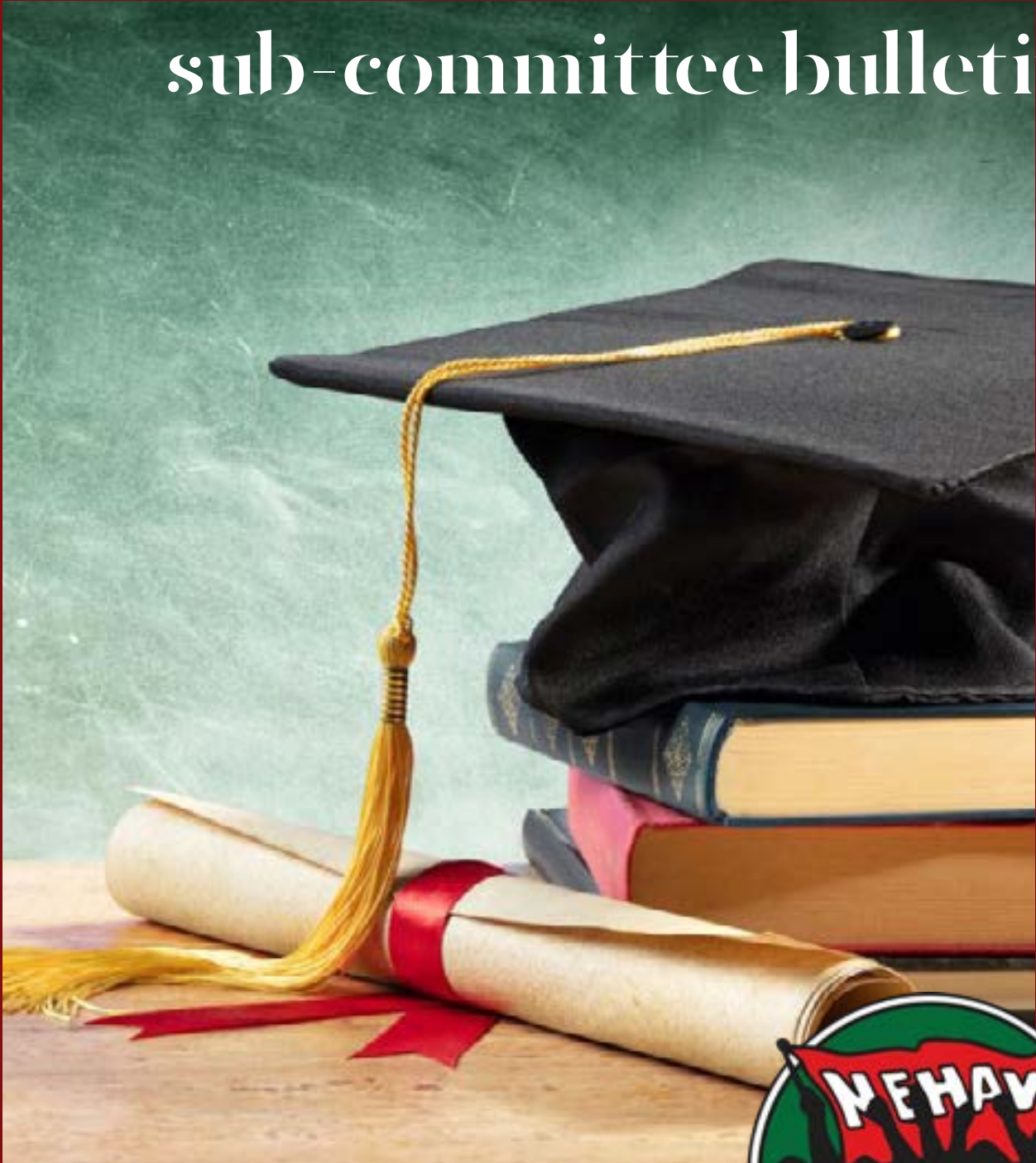


education

sub-committee bulletin

MAY 2023



contents

EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE BULLETIN | MAY 2023

editorial comment cde zola saphetha

Student number capping at public colleges, funding vs expenditure in Higher Education and its impact on bargaining processes

Review of the sustainability of the Post – Schooling Education and Training & Student Funding

NEHAWU Submission on the proposed student funding model by DHET

The Political Economy of Innovation in the context of 4IR and transformation in Higher Education

Education Front

Conclusions & Wayforward of the National Education Subcommittee

Editorial Comment

Comrades

Kindly receive profound revolutionary and militant greetings from the red transformative trade union of Bheki Mkhize and Yure Mdyogolo.

The character of every transformation and transformative process is froth with contestation and contradictions. That is the nature of social changes and reconfiguring of human and social relations. Transformation is thus an ever changing and complex struggle of interests being constantly waged, power being assumed, collected through processes of lobbying, collaboration and hegemony.

The point is deliberately raised as a context in order to emphasise the fact that the transformation of education band, particularly the post schooling system cannot and will never be ideologically neutral but remain a contested terrain. Hence, we should regard a site of struggle and the workplace at the same which is a point of production in ideological terms.

Education is one of the most crucial vehicles for shaping broader societal values. It is always a carrier of particular messages, both explicitly and implicitly. For these reasons education is not neutral, and it is important to understand this truism as a basis for approaching the tasks at hand.

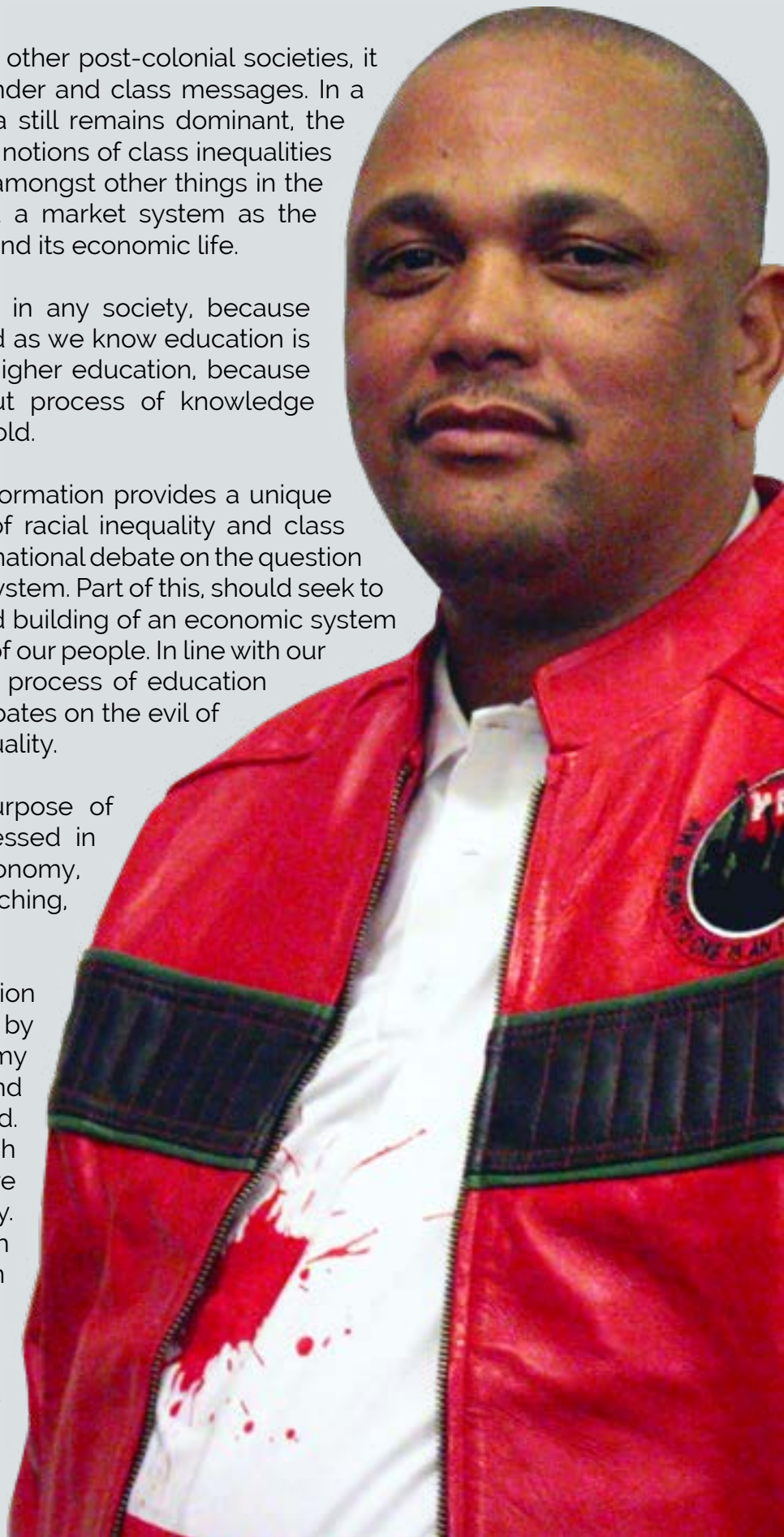
In the South Africa context, like in many other post-colonial societies, it carries and imparts particular racial, gender and class messages. In a capitalists system, in which South Africa still remains dominant, the education system continues to reinforce notions of class inequalities and class ideology. This manifest itself, amongst other things in the presentation of profit maximization and a market system as the superior form of organisation of society and its economic life.

Education, in general, is a critical area in any society, because through it, knowledge is transmitted, and as we know education is never value free. Even more critical is higher education, because not only is knowledge transmitted, but process of knowledge production, reproduction and review unfold.

The current process of education transformation provides a unique opportunity to combat the ideologies of racial inequality and class exploitation. Therefore, we should lead a national debate on the question of values and ideology in the education system. Part of this, should seek to advance values of solidarity, equality and building of an economic system that benefits the overwhelming majority of our people. In line with our ideological commitment, let us use this process of education transformation as a platform to open debates on the evil of capitalism, of racism and of gender inequality.

Generally, we regard the role and purpose of education as one that should be assessed in terms of its relations to the political economy, ideological hegemony, development, teaching, learning and research.

Though the role and purpose of education cannot only be restricted nor influenced by the above factors alone, political economy remains primarily dominant if the role and purpose of education is to be asserted. Political economy refers to the way in which both economic and human resource are produced and also distributed in society. Therefore educational institutions such as institutions of higher learning have an explicit role of producing intellectuals who offer their know-how (skills) in the political, social, cultural and economic spheres of the society. Their knowledge and skills are utilized to maintain, defend, develop, and also to change the status quo.



Antonio Gramsci, correctly asserted that every class in society creates a stratum of intellectuals, which gives ideological supremacy over other social classes. Therefore post schooling fulfil its role by producing engineers, scientists, doctors, lawyers, economists and politicians who occupies strategic positions in the political economy in order to ensure its survival.

However, it is important to note that institutions of learning can, at some stage, be used by the oppressed classes and strata to popularize their views. Learning institutions are therefore not above class struggles, but they remain integral part of ideological contestation.

The above was the context within which the discussions unfolded to affirm the ideological outlook of education in a capitalist countries like ours dictating the need for the working class formations and revolutionaries to consciously and deeply struggle for an alternative to this current capitalist mode of production as a strategic way forward.

Given our historic background of transformation here at home, we still need to attend to these critical challenges presented by the prevailing material conditions such as lack of student centeredness institutions of learning, systematic and structural governance related, consequences and implication of institutional mergers (reduction of institutions of learning), orientation and capacity of management structures and individuals, evil of racism, funding model, corruption and looting of institutional resources and subjective weaknesses of Mass Democratic Movement structures including limitations of communities in nurturing and protecting these institutions of learning campaign and the inability of recognising education as a societal responsible or issue.

More specifically, the meeting of the education committee was convened to receive presentations as highlighted below and equally to discuss the role of the Tripartite Alliance as a strategic centre and MDM structures on education, strengthen the workplace organisation in order to build a capable trade union that will represent the actual interest and aspirations of its members, the working class and poor in the sector, strengthen student – worker alliance, identify vigorous and responsive campaigns to the current challenges faced by post schooling system, workers and students including policy changes and ultimately provide an overall strategic way forward for South African society under the overarching vision of People's Education for People's Power.

This bulletin therefore as a direct product of the National Education Committee reflects brief synopsis of presentations and also share the conclusions and way forward of this committee for reading and implementation.

!!NEHAWU, the education national union!!

!Aluta Continua!



1. Student number capping at public colleges, funding vs expenditure in Higher Education and its impact on bargaining processes

According to the white paper on post schooling, the Technical Vocation Education and Training [TVET] system has increased enrolments by more than 50% from just over 345 000 in 2010 to an estimated 650 000 in 2013.

The Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET] envisaged an increase in enrolments to one million by 2015 and this was meant to be a step to right direction in order to achieve National Development Plan [NDP] targets of 2.5 million by 2030. The key objectives in strengthening colleges include improving their management and governance, developing the quality of teaching and learning, increasing



Cde Takalani G M Ratshilumela

their responsiveness to local labour markets, improving student support services, and developing their infrastructure.

Enrolments patterns between 2015 and 2023

In line with the plan, the government's 2013 white paper for post-school education and training proposed expanding enrolment in the TVET college sector to 2.5-million by 2030, but the number was capped in 2015 at 710,535 due to funding constraints. The enrolment trends from 2015 clearly shows that the TVET sector is likely to miss NDP targets of 2.5 million students by 2030 with a huge margin.

Community colleges

A new type of institution was established in 2015 to cater mainly for youth and adults who did not complete their schooling or who never attended school and thus do not qualify to study at TVET colleges and universities. These institutions are known as community colleges. They are multi-campus institutions which group together a number of existing public adult learning centres (PALCs). The White Paper has committed the provision of adequate infrastructure and a critical mass of full-time staff, and to expand the college system by adding new centres where this is necessitated by increasing enrolments and programmes. Community colleges will build on the current offerings of the PALCs in order to expand vocational and skills-development programmes and non-formal programmes. Formal programmes includes the General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) and Senior Certificate programmes currently offered, as well as the proposed new National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA) and occupational programmes funded by SETAs or the NSF.

Enrolments

The system created 9 Public Community Colleges after merging close to 3000 CLCs. The white paper envisaged headcount enrolment of one million by 2030, however due to lack of investment and systematic support the enrolments have decreased from 265 000 in 2011 to 175 000 in 2023.

Other public colleges

All public colleges under the aegis of other government departments must comply with the requirements of SAQA, education and training quality assurance institutions and the national qualifications framework (NQF). It is essential that qualifications at all public colleges should articulate easily with programmes in other post-school institutions. A government decision to shift responsibility for the agricultural colleges from the Department of Agriculture to the DHET has been gazetted.

SAIVCET

The South African Institute for Vocational and Continuing Education and Training (SAIVCET) was supposed to take off the ground from 2015 in order to provide necessary and appropriate support to the college sector. The primary responsibilities of SAIVCET according to whitepaper includes:

- Developing innovative curricula for TVET and community colleges;
- Upgrading the technical knowledge and pedagogical skills of existing staff in TVET and community colleges, and promoting the professionalisation of lecturers, instructors and trainers;
- Providing a forum for experts to develop materials for TVET and community college programmes;
- Advising the Minister on vocational and continuing education;
- Initiating research on the TVET colleges, the community colleges and the college system as a whole;
- Promoting dialogue, coordination and linkages between TVET and community

colleges, and between these institutions and universities, SETAs, employers and workers, in order to enhance coherence and articulation;

- Monitoring and evaluation of the TVET and community colleges

The institute is not yet operating which has created a vacuum on all the issues which was supposed to be addressed by SAIVCET.

2. Review of the sustainability of the Post – Schooling Education and Training & Student Funding – PDU,



Cde. Nhlonipho Baloyi

Introduction

The South African Post Schooling Education and Training sector consist both the public and private higher institutions which is made up of 26 public universities, 50 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, 9 Community Education and Training (CET), 132 and 185 private higher institutions and private colleges respectively.

The PSET sector is a broad sector which has several difficulties. However, the presentation focuses on the public component of the sector by analysing accessibility in the sector, which examines enrolments rates and completion rates.

Workers and student protests are a major manifestation of defects and failures of the transformation of South Africa's higher education. These protests also emerge as an illustration of an expanding frustration with the state of South Africa's economy, its extreme inequalities, its widespread poverty and its huge youth unemployment. According to (World Bank 2022) South Africa's has a staggering poverty rate of 55.5% while the PSET sector is prevalent with inequalities lingering from the apartheid era and the Bantu Education Act.

These historical inequities have sparked student-led protests and movements to eliminate financial and cultural constraints. The student-led protests and movements were also utilised as a tool for advocating for the prominence of decolonizing the PSET Sector. A prolific PSET sector can be the catalyst to reshape a struggling economy, lessen the unemployment rate and ultimately reduce poverty and inequalities.

Accessibility in the PSET Sector

Chapter 2 sub-section 29 (1) (b) of the Constitution states, "Everyone has a right to higher education which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible". Post 1994, equity, access to and success in the PSET sector has been imperative; these were advocated until the narratives of confronting the legacies of the apartheid policies in education were written. Though, there has been a notable increases in access, there is no comparable improvement in student success and equity. This has remained a challenge especially for students from poor socioeconomic backgrounds and also those in the historically black universities in South Africa.

University enrolment has increased from approximately 500 000 in 1994 while enrolment at the colleges has increased from approximately 200 000 in 2000. Majority of students are now Africans. This is a drastic increase although the number of students in South Africa's higher education system in relation to the size of its population of 60.6 million is still far too low compared to other middle-income developing countries. The DHET released a report during March 2022 indicating that over 1.3 million students enrolled at public and private higher education institutions in 2020, with the majority of enrolments in public higher education institutions of 1 094 808 while private higher education institutions enrolled 219 031 students. The target in the National Development Plan (NDP) is 1.6 million enrolments by 2030.

1 094 808 students enrolled in public universities, majority of students enrolled through the contact mode while others enrolled through the distance mode of learning. Contact mode and distance mode of learning is 62.3% and 37.7% respectively. Enrolment in TVET colleges reached 452 277 in 2020, reflecting a 32.8% or 221 213 decrease when compared with 673 490 in 2019. This number reflects a count of students enrolled in each enrolment cycle, there are six enrolment cycles at TVET colleges. The NDP indicates that headcount enrolment in TVET colleges should reach 2.5 million by 2030. There were 142 538 students enrolled in CET colleges in 2020. The NDP target for

enrolment in this sector is 1 million students by 2030.

In relation to completion rates, there were 237 882 graduates in public universities in 2020, which was 7.2% or 15 940 higher when compared with graduates 221 942, recorded in 2019. TVET colleges indicate that total of 104 310 students completed N3, N6 and NC (V) Level 4 in TVET colleges in 2020, which are key exit levels in this sector. This translated to the following completion rates: 90.8% for N3, 95.7% for N6 and 56.2% for NC (V) Level 4. In 2020, CET colleges recorded a completion figure of 22 764.

Challenges of accessibility in the PSET Sector

The sharp rise in student numbers indicates a major improvement in access to higher education. Most of the expansion is due to higher enrolment of black students. However, there is continued racial disparity in the student population.

Majority of university students are now black indicating that nearly 70 % of university students are Africans, but only 14% of African students are enrolled in higher education institutions, as opposed to 57% of white students. Black and female students are under-represented in science, engineering and technology as well as in business and commerce programmes. There is a huge White male dominate in postgraduate studies.

Educational disparities remain even during the Post-Apartheid era as South Africa faces many challenges in recovering from its apartheid past. Racial disparities in education are apparent long before a student reaches higher education in South Africa.

In 2018, nearly half of Black and Coloured South Africans did not complete secondary school while more than 80% of White South Africans completed. Of the Black students that completed secondary school, only 4.3% enrolled in a higher education institution, and as of 2020, only 4.1% have a degree.

The World Bank found that if the household head achieved some higher education in South Africa, the risk of poverty reduced by about 30% compared to household heads with no schooling. With the nation's racially oppressive history, access to inclusive and affordable education is a key pathway out of poverty for Black South Africans. Educational barriers, the Bantu Education Act of 1953 segregated schools by race and the lesser-known Extension of University Act of 1959 prohibited non-Whites from attending formerly open universities.

White supremacy ideologies are still visible in many top universities, especially traditional universities. While many Black students enrol in these universities, they struggle to find belonging. Therefore, there is a huge and significant need to break the hegemony of racism in the PSET sector, especially in the white liberal higher education institutions.

The digital divide is another difficulty that has confronted the PSET sector. The COVID-19 pandemic forced higher education institutions in South Africa to move to remote learning. While more South Africans below the poverty level are attending universities at greater frequency, a large percentage do not have access to the internet or digital devices in their households. This relatively new form of disparity is digital inequality and the pandemic exacerbates this issue for students. The resulting exclusion of many students from teaching and learning reflected the stark disparities in socio-economic conditions as learning shifted to the home.

The online turn illuminated and amplified the existing inequalities in South African society, with the poor, marginalised, precarious and under-resourced disproportionately experiencing its fallout.

For impoverished black working class and rural students, online distance learning cannot provide opportunity or success, when students study occasionally due to lack proper laptops in unstable Wi-Fi hotspots, with power outages and in congested, noisy home environments. As of 2019, a study estimated that only 10.4% of South African homes have access to the internet. In addition, a 2020 survey report found that only 60% of students own a laptop.

Lack of quiet place to study. Students who received funding through (NSFAS), below the poverty line, felt disproportionate effects. 90% of students indicated that the only devices they own are smartphones. There was another challenge of electrical power instability and "loadshedding",

GBV in PSET sector especially the 2021 reports. The sector is rocked by gruesome high profile murders of women students, and despite calls on DHET by student the situation has not ceased. Lastly, the impact of the faltering economy on higher education, it pertains not only to tight funding but to the demand side that is, whether university graduates will be able to find jobs after their degrees.

Funding in the PSET Sector

The PSET sector is funded through public funds, student fees and donors. Public HEIs are funded directly by the DHET (Universities subsidies+ Infrastructure). Historically while universities, advanced in technology and infrastructure due to external funding and many self-funding students. Many still embrace and names their building with names such as Openheiner, Brenmer etc. Black universities mainly depend on NSFAS. The processes of funding TVET colleges are more complex, following the constitutional amendment to shift the function of the colleges from the provincial sphere of government to the national sphere. As from 1 April 2015, the national sphere of government became responsible for paying the salaries of TVET college staff and direct transfers to TVET colleges.

The allocation of funds to public HEIs is based on a number of criteria and planning

processes, including student enrolment planning processes, Allocation of funds in TVET colleges is based on national norms and standards.

Funding depends on types programmes offered, student enrolment numbers, the cost of delivery, the need for capital infrastructure and the ability of colleges to utilise resources efficiently. The total funding allocated to public HEIs, TVET colleges and CET colleges during the 2021/22 financial year was R57.5 billion, representing a 1.2% increase compared to R56.8 billion which was allocated in the 2020/21 financial year.

NSFAS allocated R48.1 billion for student funding during the 2021/2022 academic year, which was 11 billion higher than what was allocated in 2020 (R37.1 billion). The number of students who benefitted from NSFAS funding was 765 740 in 2020, representing a 3.5% (25 703) increase when compared with the number of beneficiaries in 2019 (740 037).

The number of students who benefitted from NSFAS was higher for public HEIs (504 336 or 65.9%) as compared with TVET colleges (261 404 or 34.1%). A total of 12 964 students were awarded Funza Lushaka bursaries in 2020 which are aimed at assisting students.

During the 2020/21 financial year, the skills levy system disbursed approximately R12.4 billion, of which a larger proportion was disbursed to the SETAs (R9.9 billion) while the National Skills Fund (NSF) received R2.5 billion. The low amount collected in the 2020/21 financial year can be attributed to the four months' payment holiday for skills development levies from May to August 2020 which was announced in April 2020.

The relief was meant to assist employers to deal with the negative impact that came with the lockdown due to the outbreak of COVID-19. It is indicated that for NSFAS 2023/24 government through DHET has allocated R47.6 billion for student funding, R38.6 billion for universities, and R8.9 billion for TVET colleges. Challenges that emerge from funding

There are persistent funding and fee challenges that South African universities and the PSET sector in general are experiencing. These challenges constrain the right to just and affordable access to higher education for thousands of students. There is a huge compounding negative impact that these challenges are having on students, universities and the working class at large. In recent years, they have repeatedly played themselves out at the start of almost every academic year. Major challenges are student debt, the missing middle and corruption

Since 2011, South Africa's student debt has spiralled from R3.2-billion to R16.5 billion in 2022 (Wits 2022). As the 26 public universities in South Africa cater to, in excess of 1 million students, with plans by government, to add a

further 600,000 to the sum by 2030. An increase in student debt is attributed to the historical underfunding of the sector as a percentage of GDP, an under-performing and compromised economy, and a larger set of austerity measures underpinning the financial crisis in the country as a whole.

The university students are suffering due to historical debt, as it also hinders students to register and allow them to progress with their studies. Historical debt is also a major contributor to university drop out statistics. Students in their final year are not able to graduate and obtain their qualification after completing their studies because of historical debt. However, there are other universities that allow students to graduate but they do not get a qualification as they are owing the institution. This also contributes to the unsuitable levels of unemployed that the youth is confronted with.

The missing middle refers to students who are illustrated as being too poor to afford university themselves but also not poor enough to qualify for government funding. In order to qualify for NSFAS, your household income needs to be below R350 000 per year and, while this is great for the disadvantaged, the middle class is underserved by this system. These students are disadvantaged as they cannot afford to study cash.

The University of Johannesburg tried to assist these category of students by running a Missing Middle Campaign throughout 2016, raising over R60 million to help finance those students who don't qualify for financial aid, whilst institutions such as the University of Cape town offer gap funding for students whose family gross income ranges between R350 000 and R600 000. This is not sufficient to cater for the missing middle students. They are also confronted with huge student debt and therefore unable to register or obtain qualification upon graduate.

The students are confronted with major challenges on student accommodation. This is mainly fuelled by university lack of students' accommodation infrastructure. Therefore, an overwhelming number of universities outsource students' accommodation.

Many of these outsourced student accommodation tends to be even costly. Many NSFAS students, across South Africa, are facing an accommodation crisis due to the recently announced R45 000 accommodation funding cap.

Students are expected to cover the shortfall between accommodation costs and the accommodation cap. The DUT 2020 study on student residences showed that accessibility to the university accommodation for residential purposes is a great challenge for many students across the country.

According to the Skills Portal website, NSFAS received 1 587 968 applications for 2023 and as of 31 January 613 909 applicants have been provisionally funded. Many students without feedback (specifically newcomers) were unable to make plans for their accommodation as they were uncertain of whether they would be funded or not, this leaves the lives of students in danger as they are resolute to temporary staying in

accommodation that are not safe in all angles.

The students are confronted with major challenges on student accommodation. This is mainly fuelled by university lack of students' accommodation infrastructure. Therefore, an overwhelming number of universities outsource students' accommodation. Many of these outsourced student accommodation tends to be even costly. Many NSFAS students, across South Africa, are facing an accommodation crisis due to the recently announced R45 000 accommodation funding cap.

Students are expected to cover the shortfall between accommodation costs and the accommodation cap. The DUT 2020 study on student residences showed that accessibility to the university accommodation for residential purposes is a great challenge for many students across the country.

According to the Skills Portal website, NSFAS received 1 587 968 applications for 2023 and as of 31 January 613 909 applicants have been provisionally funded. Many students without feedback (specifically newcomers) were unable to make plans for their accommodation as they were uncertain of whether they would be funded or not, this leave the lives if students and danger as they resolute to temporal staying in accommodation that are not safe in all angles.

The current model of student funding is stipulated to unsustainable by various stakeholders. The government introduces new funding model as an alternative. However, in February 2022, the National Skills Fund (NSF) has been found by the Auditor General to have failed to account for R5 Billion. This fund is a government public entity that reports to DHET.

In the same year, NSFAS had to halt its activities with regards to advancing funding decisions, and subsequently, universities had to halt and extend their registration periods because NSFAS had a funding shortfall of R9.6 Billion

A competitive remuneration for PSET staff is very vital because in the face of ageing academics at most South African universities, as well as the transformation of the academic profession in order to make it more representative of the South African population, it is important to attract the best qualified young people from all population groups in significant numbers into the Academy. Without competitive remuneration for academics more formally known in Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) as instruction/research staff), especially at the lower echelons of the profession, many promising potential academics, as well as current academic staff, will be lured away to well paying positions in the public sector, as well as in the private sector.

There is also an ongoing brain drain in our country. Some of the best researchers at universities in South Africa annually took up prestigious academic positions in other countries, sometimes as a result of better remuneration associated with these positions.

On the other hand, as a result of the weak rand it is difficult to attract international academic staff to South African higher education institutions. It is therefore the benefit of our country to ensure that the staff in the PSET sector is well remunerated.

The data was collected from by the 26 universities and have been recorded on the HESA report. It is important to note that there is no bargaining council for universities therefore salaries per occupation differ from one institution to another, so this document averaged the salary increases of institutions. According to the university salary agreements with universities. The average salary increase for university staff is 3% for 2021 and 4% for 2022.

With UCT leading by increasing 3.8% for Junior Research Fellow, Assistant Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor. Lecturer 4.8% and Professor 3.0%. In 2022 the university increased by 7.2% across broad.

Although, the data reflect an increase on the compensation of the academics, the average annual inflation rate growth 6.9% and average annual GDP growth rate 0.9% while the average universities growth rate 4%. This data reflect that the compensation of workers has been growing at very slow below the inflation rate. It clearly indicate that the purchasing power of workers have been declining.

On the 30th March 2023, the SARB announced a rise of Repurchase (Repo) Rate by 50 basis point, bringing it to 7.75 per cent. This has been recorded as the 9th decision regarding the consecutive interest hike since November 2021

This makes the lives of workers to be unbearable as it is very difficult for them to obtain any type of loan and extremely difficult to repay the current loans that they may have acquired. The PSET sector has also been burdened by outsourcing. Outsourcing is the process of hiring an outside organisation that is not affiliated with the university to complete specific tasks that would have been otherwise performed by the in-house university staff.

Outsourcing has been prevalent in the PSET sector. The negative impact of outsourcing in the PSET sector is strongly experienced by employees in the low skill pay category, such as those who provide cleaning services, security services, catering services and gardening services.

The theoretical advocacy around outsourcing derives from the notion of competition as the driver of efficiency, quality, improvement and innovation. The theory is overlaid with practical considerations around cost-cutting in an age of austerity and the need to tackle failings in public services.

The South African government has pledged its commitment to the attainment of decent work and sustainable livelihoods for all workers, and has undertaken to mainstream decent work imperatives into national development strategies. The most

significant components of decent work is job security for the workers, having a living wage and workers having a right to join a trade union.

The commitment of achieving decent work and sustainable livelihoods for all workers can only be attained under insourcing; this is because South Africa is currently defined by poverty and is amongst the most unequal countries in the world, and Outsourcing significantly contributes towards income inequality.

There are two tier systems of employment model that co-exist in the South African economy. There is a group of workers that earn a living wage and those that earn way below the living wage.

These are the employment models that co-exist in the economy and contribute towards poverty and inequality. This can be reduced by prioritising insourcing. Insourcing is a business process performed within the operational infrastructure of the organisation whereby an organisation brings in specialists to fill the needs of the organisation, and to perform tasks that would otherwise have been outsourced. Insourcing can be done by delegating a job to someone within an organization as opposed to outsourcing someone outside the organization.

Through outsourcing, employers are able to reduce the number of employees together with the wages but the work load increases resulting in high level of stress and lower morale. Outsourced contracts have become an established form of business and hiring of workers and rendering of service. However the right to enter into outsourcing contracts can be limited in pursuance of decent jobs and the right to fair labour practices. The cost of insourcing to employers will be very little if not absent because it is already budgeted for. Insourcing will also reduce unemployment which is a source of political and economic instability.

Insourcing will result in increased job security, better wages and purchasing power and increased labour stability which will ultimately contribute to the overall economic growth. As a result NEHAWU has been advocating and demanding insourcing for all



PSET sector staff. The PSET sector institutions that have implemented insourcing has reduced the struggles of the working class by bettering their lives and increasing their standards of living.



Cde. Barry Mitchel

3. NEHAWU Submission on the proposed student funding model by DHET – PDU.

Background of the Proposed Funding Models

On 01 November 2022, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) convened a number of stakeholders to present recommendations from the Department's Ministerial Task Team (MTT) on a sustainable funding model that would ensure the provisions contained in Section 29 of the Constitution, find resonance within the higher education landscape. In particular, seeking to address persistent features of the colonial-apartheid legacy on our education system whilst also attempting to tackle many contemporary symptoms associated with a highly unequal society.

The presentation by DHET's MTT was prefaced by the tabling of the Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) on 26 October 2022 before Parliament, wherein

the Minister of Finance indicated that a comprehensive funding model was in development by DHET which would feature in the 2023 Budget Speech. In November 2022, NEHAWU was invited to develop a submission on the MTT's recommendations to DHET. Our submission was submitted to DHET

Evolution of Funding Higher Education in South Africa

From 1953 to-date, there has been a radical shift from following a narrow formulaic approach to determine funding models in South Africa. This approach, informed by the colonial-apartheid character of the economy and its government's racial, political and social oppression, has created an ongoing legacy that is at present, being extended by National Treasury.

The 1953 Holloway formula $[F(H)=S_b+S_s+A]$ represents the possible origins of South Africa's funding model. It is narrow because it solely determines funding based on "basic" and "standard" teaching determinations that are not linked to student numbers. From 1959 the +A of the formula included a "staff living costs compensation". This funding model is devoid of any progressive notions of knowledge acquisition as a means for societal development, it is purely inhumane. The funding model was also taken advantage of by universities looking to increase subsidies, forcing the Apartheid government to revise its formula.

From 1977 onwards the Apartheid government implemented the revised, Van Wyk de Vries formula and, from 1984 to 1993 the South African Post-Secondary Education Information System (SAPSE) subsidy formula for higher education institutions was developed and implemented. The earlier version of the SAPSE formula (1984 to 1986) bizarrely determined an assumption that students themselves, are in the best position to determine their own "welfare" and have the best knowledge to decide on which course to enrol for.

From 1993 to 2003, so-called earmarked funding for subsidising Higher Education emanated in the establishment of National Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), the predecessor of the 1991 Tertiary Education Fund of South Africa (TEFSA). From 1995, NSFAS was administered by TEFSA until 2000, when TEFSA became legally known as NSFAS.

Chronology of important policies in the Higher Education Landscape:

- 1997 Education White Paper 3;
- 2012 Green Paper for Post Schooling and Education;
- 2013 White Paper for Post-School Education and Training;
- 2014 Gazetted White Paper for Post-School Education and Training.

Department of Higher Education and Training Funding Model Proposal

The 1994 politico-judicial transition radically shifted the notion of education as a formulaic business enterprise based on racial supremacy to espousing the principles contained in Section 29 of the Constitution (derived from notions contained in the Freedom Charter and in the subsequent resolutions of the ANC-led alliance conferences and congresses). The challenge however was the extent of the task at hand. Student intake was considerably increasing post 1994, the transition was budgeted for in the earmarked funding allocated to redress from 1993 to 2003, but this was cosmetic.

The real catalytic change came in the form of the student protests that engulfed Higher Education campuses in 2015. It might also be worth reminding comrades that prior to the Fees Must Fall protests, a 2012 DHET working group was established with a scope of developing conceptual policies on Fee Free University Education for the Poor. Subsequent to this, the MTT report was tasked with developing support and funding models for poor and Missing Middle students.

Terms of reference of the MTT:

- To outline the current status of government financial support to students from poor and working-class backgrounds and related funding challenges;
- To review work that has already been done to outline the policy challenges relating to student funding in the higher education and training system;
- To identify long-term policy change proposals to ensure a fair and sustainable policy in the long term that is most closely aligned to the high-level policy goals of government, taking into account the comprehensive funding needs of the post-school system;
- To make short term recommendations on possible changes to student financial aid to be implemented in the medium-term (from 2022 onwards);
- To model the costs of different policy options for presentation to Cabinet; and
- To identify appropriate, sustainable funding sources for a comprehensive student funding model, within the context of a sustainable funding mechanism for subsidy and infrastructure funding required to support the projected expansion and capacity development of the PSET sector as

- outlined in current policy.
- Ministerial Task Team funding model outcomes

Option 1 - Continuing with the status quo, Government to continue with the fully subsidised model.

DHET has deduced that this option is unsustainable due to increases in costs and growth in student number.

Option 2 - Introduce a hybrid model. This will take the form of a combined loan/ bursary model using income thresholds. Different loan models include: a Direct Lending Arrangement (similar to NSFAS but stricter regulation through SARS), *Wholesale Lending Model (Government contributes equity to independent loan schemes for investment) and Credit guarantees (Government de-risks lending to Missing Middle).

Option 3 - Introduce a modified status quo model which contains a range of controls on a fully subsidised model. This model forecasts higher course pass rates, capped accommodation allowances, constrained growth in other allowances and slower than inflation increases.

Position of NEHAWU on the Proposed Funding Model

It is without a doubt that policy changes have seen a significant shift in the prioritisation of ensuring students from working class and poor backgrounds (characterised as a family earning an income of less than R350k per annum) have access to institutions of higher learning through a fully-subsidised model. The funding model put forward proposes that DHET and the MTT are now in the process of exploring different formulas to ensure financial sustainability and affordability for students from working class and poor backgrounds (as well as the so-called Missing Middle). However, student debt in public universities equates to approximately R16.5 billion in 2020. The MTT presentation to stakeholders in November 2022 began by quoting the Constitution, which amongst others, requires that "the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible". It was our expectation that any review must then build on the existing gains on a sustainable basis in order for the state to progressively make available and accessible measures for the realisation of this right. This would mean:

- Addressing the "missing-middle" issue;
- Closing shortfalls going forward;
- Making proposals on how to fund students who are currently eligible for bursaries into postgraduate studies;
- Analysing the issue of R16.5 billion student debt – to find out its drivers – based on the understanding of the fact that this debt represents the lack of money on the students' behalf and the lack of comprehensive funding mechanism on government's behalf and therefore some consideration of closing the gap must be looked into.

The notion of the “Missing Middle”

The definition of the notion of the Missing Middle has been expanded in a monetary sense since its inception into the DHET analysis. Initially the notion was characterised as: “... children from families who earn above the R122 000 per annum qualification threshold, but who still cannot afford to attend university.” Subsequently, the definition of the notion was expanded to: “... students who come from households who earn from R0 to R600 000.”

The MTT has developed a number of mechanisms to fund the so-called Missing Middle. These mechanisms include different loan and bursary options for students that fall within this category. DHET does admit however that the current definition is limited as it categorises students falling within the so-called Missing Middle to be solely determined by household income thresholds and NOT the student's funding constraints and needs.

The MTT's analysis also points to the socio-economic stratification or non-homogenous nature of the so-called Missing Middle and identifies “categories within categories” of this section of student society, these include i) Self-Paying students who rely on their own financial resources to fund their education; ii) Credit Funded students who rely on loans and debt to fund their education through the credit rating of their parents/ guardians and, iii) Sponsored Funding in which students are awarded funding through prerequisites or qualifying criteria (family/ household income, academic performance or tertiary qualification sought) and, iv) NSFAS eligible non-funded students who fall within the expanded definition of the so-called Missing Middle, these are students from households who earn an income of between R0 to R600 000 and/ or who for some reason or another, are not able to qualify for NSFAS funding.

What is the Missing Middle? In the context of the MTT's analysis, the notion is based on household income. While the MTT admits that a deeper criteria ought to be explored, in addition to the standard income thresholds, classifying a strata within a strata based on income is cosmetic in consideration of the student's social conditions. This brings to question the validity of the “Missing Middle” in the context of claims the MTT makes. Weaknesses in the funding model proposal

The union recognises that Government, pursuant to Section 29 of the Constitution, has made progressive strides towards funding higher education through various mechanisms. To reiterate however, that student debt is sky-rocketing, the prediction in 2020 places student debt in public universities at R16.5 billion. The status quo model (Option 1) will incur a R4.4 billion forecasted shortfall.

The processes undertaken by Government since the 2015 student demands for free higher education included international benchmarking higher education funding models. MTT has chosen to primarily benchmark developed states from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) such as

Denmark, France, and Germany etc. MTT could have included a broader variety of states to benchmark higher education funding models. In particular, states that are located within the periphery of international markets, states that are developing but constrained by colonial manifestations in their respective economies, states in Latin America and Asia by example.

The International Comparative Work by the MTT is therefore embarrassingly illogical. None of these countries are SA's peers in terms of per capita GDP, university participation rate and let alone the crisis level of poverty and inequality. Some of them, in their history when the social conditions were similar to our current, they embarked on the "massification" of university education, which may no longer be necessary for them in the current situation due to their already expanded access. Just to say "high fees" and "low-fees" means nothing because it's unrelated to our and their economic context and development imperatives and other socioeconomic and demographic variables in those countries.

Unfortunately, the thrust of this report is little more than the recycling of the recommendations in the Heher Commission Report, which was correctly widely rejected. It represents a consistent pattern on the part of the Treasury to claw back the gains of the working class and the poor, as we see on social assistants and NHI. Our proposals must defend the current gains. The shortfalls are budgetary shortfalls informed by an austerity budget linked to the debt/deficit targets that have been set whilst giving away corporate tax cuts. The recommendations are abstract from the reality of youth unemployment and the national imperatives of addressing poverty and unemployment – betraying the fact that what is mentioned in Background and Context is merely routine. There is no reflection on the widening backlog in terms of the White Paper targets with regard to increasing the student populations, especially in technical vocational training.

Therefore, ultimately it is unclear whether the MTT is set out to address the missing-middle issues or to use this issue as a ruse to embark on a total overhaul of the existing funding mechanism, including roll-back the existing gains for the working class. In this regard, to premise the recommendation on a new definition of the missing-middle that incorporates everyone from households with incomes below R600 000 is conceptually ridiculous and dishonest. We would not engage on this basis – why calling all these students missing-middle then? It seems the underlying purpose of this review is about "the sustainability of the post-school education and training student financial aid system" which is another way of saying how to make funding fit within the austerity envelope and typically not consider the implications from the standpoint of skills development, inequalities and poverty. The DHET needs to be honest. It can't on the one hand talk about current "funding shortfalls based on the original model for the funding of NSFAS since 2020" and on the other hand pretend it seeks a comprehensive funding solution. It seems that comprehensive in this regard actually means reviewing the current coverage of NSFAS in order to roll-back the gains. At the beginning it is presented as a task of addressing the issue of the missing-middle, when in fact the

proposals seek to overhaul and roll-back the gains of the working class students.

The problem is that these models are narrowly focused on the existing fiscal envelope – fitting funding within the current MTBPS envelope – they are not even guided by the imperatives of youth unemployment, national participation rate or even the White Paper/NDP targets, especially in the TVET sector. The short-term initiative of “exploring the possibility of a government guarantee for commercial bank loans” must be clarified:

- What would be the government’s demands or conditions on commercial banks in providing them with this captive market?
- What would “guaranteed loans” mean in terms of the current extortionate spread between the Repo rate and the bank’s lending rate and who is to address defaulting students?
- Why would the banks be willing to forfeit the current profit margins from the usurious rates they are charging on those who are not eligible for funding by NSFAS for a government guaranteed scheme?
- Why would this privatised funding approach even be regarded as comprehensive on the part of the government?

Once again, the recommendations include at least the establishment of two agencies, when we already have NSFAS. Yet more entities are fragmenting the state and creating top-heavy and highly paid executive jobs – in eventually outsourcing entities. There is no concern about the unnecessary mushrooming of agencies, instead of consolidating and benefiting from economies of scale.

Wayforward

From August 2022, NEHAWU has been consistent in requesting and engagement with DHET on this proposal as well as another submission. A deeper assessment of the criteria requirements for funding needs to be explored and developed by the DHET in the short-to-long term. The current classification of a fluctuating strata within a strata based on household income can be demystified by simply referring to students who come from working class and poor backgrounds, attested to the MTT’s own presentation which indicates that 85.6% of all South African households fall in the low-income category, earning less than R350 000 per annum.

The reality is that most South African households live beyond their own financial means, are highly indebted and therefore find no linkage to the notion of a Missing Middle. Categorising young people in society based upon their parents or guardians household income misses the contextual relationship between our history of structured inequality and racism with that of contemporary developmental ideals for higher education.

The 18 recommendations tabled by the MTT are supported in principle by NEHAWU, there is little doubt that anyone would disagree with the immediate need to develop a

sustainable funding model, to ensure tighter measures are put in place to account for resources allocated to the Department, to pressure National Treasury into exploring the possibility of a government guarantee for commercial bank loans etc.

A photograph of Prof Rasigan Maharajh, a man with a long white beard and glasses, wearing a dark blue jacket. He is standing at a podium with a microphone, gesturing with his right hand as if speaking. The background is a plain wall with a dark wood panel.

Prof Rasigan Maharajh

4. Political Economy of Innovation in the context of 4IR and transformation in Higher Education – Member of the Committee.

Introduction

“The principle which it pursued, of resolving each process into its constituent movements, without any regard to their possible execution by the hand of man, created the new modern science of technology. The varied, apparently unconnected, and petrified forms of the industrial processes now resolved themselves into so many conscious and systematic applications of natural science to the attainment of given useful effects” [Marx, 1867]

“The opening up of new markets, foreign or domestic, and the organizational development from the craft shop to such concerns as U.S. Steel illustrate the same process of industrial mutation—if I may use that biological term—that incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one. This process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about capitalism” [Schumpeter, 1942]

Colonialism: Science and Technology

"It is common knowledge that the gap between the output of the metropolises and that of the colonies increased by at least fifteen to twenty times during the epoch of colonialism. More than anything else, it was the advance of scientific technique in the metropolises which was the cause of the great gulf between African and Western European levels of productivity by the end of the colonial period.

Therefore, it is essential to understand the role of colonialism itself in bringing about the scientific progress in the metropolises, and its application to industry. It would be extremely simple-minded to say that colonialism in Africa or anywhere else caused Europe to develop its science and technology.

The tendency towards technological innovation and renovation was inherent in capitalism itself, because of the drive for profits. However, it would be entirely accurate to say that the colonization of Africa and other parts of the world formed an indispensable link in a chain of events which made possible the technological transformation of the base of European capitalism" [Rodney, 1972]

Developing Under-development

"European science met the needs of its own society, and particularly those of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie did not suffer from hunger and starvation. Bourgeois science therefore did not consider those things as needs which had to be met and overcome—not even among their own workers and least of all on behalf of Africans. This is just a specific application of the general principle that the exploitation of Africa was being used to create a greater gap between Africa and capitalist Europe. The exploitation and the comparative disadvantage are the ingredients of underdevelopment.

In particular, the fantastic changes in science did not reach African classrooms, for there were few schools where science subjects were taught. Similarly, the evolution of higher technical education did not have any counterpart in colonial Africa

"Science and technology derive from the effort to understand and control the natural environment. Familiarity with the history of science is essential to an awareness of the development of society"

"A society develops economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment. This capacity for dealing with the environment is dependent on the extent to which they understand the laws of nature (science), on the extent to which they put that understanding into practice by devising tools (technology), and on the manner in which work is organized" [Rodney, 1972]

The Political Economy of Innovation

"It is a major challenge to understand how modes of innovation and innovation performance relate to the degree of inequality in a society both in the North and in the South. In a neo-liberal discourse inequality is seen as a factor that promotes entrepreneurship and initiative. In a learning economy discourse it might be seen as something that makes it more difficult to build social capital and trust that is the basis for interactive learning" (Lundvall et al, 2011)

"National system of innovation: There is no single accepted definition for this. What is important is the web of interaction in the system. It is a system of interconnected institutions that create, store and transfer the knowledge, skills and artefacts that define new STI" (DSI, 2022)

Science, Technology, & Innovation Decadal Plan (2022 – 2031)

The White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation sets out the long-term policy direction for the South African government to ensure a growing role for science, technology and innovation (STI) in a more prosperous and inclusive society. It focuses on using STI to accelerate inclusive economic growth, make the economy more competitive, and improve people's daily lives. It aims to help South Africa benefit from global developments such as rapid technological advancement and geopolitical and demographic shifts, as well as respond to the threats associated with some of these global trends. A Decadal Plan for STI was developed to serve as an implementation plan for the White Paper focusing on the following:

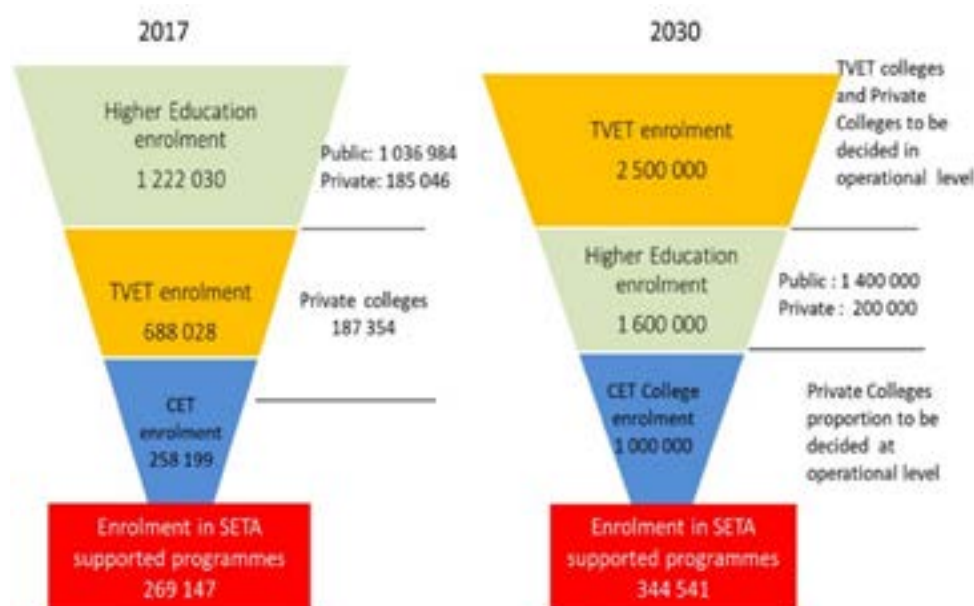
- Established sectors: Manufacturing, agriculture and mining
- New sources of growth: The digital and circular economy
- Health innovation
- Energy innovation
- Innovation-enabled capable state
- Innovation in support of social progress
- Societal grand challenges:
 1. Climate change and environmental sustainability
 2. Future proof education and skills
 3. Future of society

DSI on 'South Africa's human resources for STI

Indicator	Baseline	2030 targets
Average grade 8 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study scores	264 [per year] 420 [projected for 2023]	500

PSET enrolment	TVET = 688 028 CET = 258 199 Universities = 1 222 030 [2017]	TVET = 2 500 000 CET = 1 000 000 Universities = 1 600 000
Number of Artisans produced/certified	19 100 [2017]	30 000
Learners eligible for university admission	153 610 [2017]	450 000
Graduates [public universities]	227 188 [2018]	450 000
Engineers per million of population	265 [2017]	500
Postgraduate enrolment as a proportion of total university enrolment	15% [2018]	>25%
Annual doctor graduates	3 344 [2018]	5 000

DHET on PSET futures



4th Industrial Revolution

Whilst Africa' engagements in the first three industrial revolutions have generally not resulted in the maximisation of benefits for the peoples of the continent, the technologies of the 4IR have significantly lower barriers to entry than previous iterations

The possibilities of technological leapfrogging do however require some critical analysis. Technological learning and infrastructural development have progressed incrementally and accumulatively across human history

It is important that the advancement of the current generation of technological change creatively destroys legacy systems whilst continuously building and expanding the knowledge research frontier.

University Transformation

The NECC has opened the way for people's power to be developed in our struggle for a free, democratic, compulsory and non-racial education. The crisis committees have brought all sectors of the community together in the pursuit of this noble goal. Students, parents and teachers now have democratic organisations available through which we have begun to take some control over education. They provide the vehicles through which divisions between young and old, teachers and parents can be overcome. Not only this, but our democratic crisis committees can, and must be used to help tackle all the problems which we face, to develop and deepen people's power in the townships and in the schools. The education struggle is a political struggle in South Africa. We are fighting for the right to self-determination in the education sphere as in all other spheres" (Sisulu, 1987)

"Since Margaret Thatcher, the role of academia has been to service the status quo, not challenge it in the name of justice, tradition, imagination, human welfare, the free play of the mind or alternative visions of the future. ... there is no university without humane inquiry, which means that universities and advanced capitalism are fundamentally incompatible" (Eagleton: 2010)

These are the challenges currently with in relation to University Transformation:

- Commodification of Knowledge
- Institutional Corporatisation
- Managerialism & Financialisation
- Fiduciary Responsibility & Governance
- Identity Politics & Corporate Capture
- Corruption & Maladministration

Broader Conclusions

"To predict what direction science will take in its further development is, evidently, impossible. As long as [people] of science depend upon the rich and the governments, so long will they of necessity remain subject to influence from this quarter; and this, of course, can again arrest for a time the development of science" (Kropotkin, 1903)

"True development in the [global South] requires investment in human capacities and a new scientific and technological revolution to fulfil human and planetary needs, cooperative

integration of economies to enhance industrial, data and human resource chains and sustainable connectivity and green infrastructure to diffuse the gains widely" (IMG, 2021)



Cde Zola Saphetha

5. Presentation on Education Front – General Secretary, Cde. Zola Saphetha (his picture)

Historical Background

As the school boycotts continued and the militant youth took to the streets to fight running battles with the security forces, there was growing concern among parents and educators that a whole generation of young people were growing up uneducated. Militant youth were focused on their anger against the apartheid system and viewed the struggle as more important than their education. The rallying cry was: 'Liberation Now, Education Later!' However, without schooling, the youth had limited prospects for the future. The most they could hope for would be work as unskilled, cheap labour; the worst the spectre of unemployment.

In an attempt to deal with the crisis in schools, groups of concerned parents, teachers and students came together in December 1985 and formed the National Consultative Conference (NCC). This conference was organised by the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee, which was formed to deal with the education crisis.

The Conference put forward political demands to the government such as the unbanning of COSAS, the withdrawal of troops from the townships and the release of

students and teachers from detention. But it also called for students to return to school and to work for change from within. And the way to do this would be through People's Education.

Formation of National Education Crisis Committee [NECC]
In 1986 the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) was formed. The NECC urged students and teachers to challenge the system of education from within the schools, and to use knowledge and skills to empower students to fight apartheid. It proposed the introduction of a more relevant form of education called 'People's Education' and developed alternative teaching materials to counter the apartheid ideology inherent in the curriculum.

Thus, while it supported students' political demands, the NECC also tried to get students to go back to school. They also believed that youth activism could be more easily controlled and coordinated in schools. It put forward alternative slogans such as 'People's Education for People's Power' and 'Education for liberation' and suspended the school boycott.

The vision of 'People's Education' captured the imagination of the students. The NECC was later banned and many of its leaders detained.

Orientation of NECC

The idea of People's Education was reinforced when the NECC met in 1986. At the heart of the campaign for People's Education was an attempt to gain political control of education. The NECC wanted to shift the control of education from the Department of Education and Training (DET) to communities. It aimed to set up structures in communities where parents, teachers and students would work to create a better, non-racial and democratic education for all.

The NECC recognised the important role of teachers in implementing People's Education and it worked with teachers' organisations to try to improve the strained relations that existed between students and teachers.

In March 1986 the NECC, which by that stage had representatives countrywide, held a congress in Durban

to evaluate the progress the government had made with the demands made at the December 1985 conference.

Most Important Decision of NECC

- A call to all students to celebrate May Day (Workers' Day) in the most appropriate manner.
- To expose, isolate and oppose Inkatha.
- To declare 16 June a national youth day and to launch a national stay-away action for 16, 17, and 18 June.
- To encourage all progressive teacher, parent and student bodies immediately to implement "people's education".
- A call that all banned organisations (including the ANC) be unbanned and that all political prisoners be released
- A call on all communities and democratic organisations to launch campaigns at regional and national level to give appropriate support to all forms of rent, consumer and other boycotts.

NECC Decisions

These decisions indicate that the NECC positioned itself explicitly within the political arena. Under the influence of the NECC the focus gradually shifted from school boycotts to a struggle for "people's education". In practice this meant a demand that time be made on the school calendar for the study of "alternative material". This was provided by the student councils, parent committees and support organisations. The ANC also supported the struggle for "people's education". Accordingly black education was transformed into a political battle-field by the mid-eighties.

The government did everything in its power to prevent these politicization actions. In April 1986 it announced a 10-year action plan for black education, with the aim of eventually providing an equal standard of education for all. The NECC rejected this proposal and insisted that alternative education programmes be introduced. In reply to these demands almost the entire executive of the NECC was arrested and the Department of Education and Training closed a number of schools that had been labelled "hot spots". The school boycott continued in one form or another on a relatively large scale until 1987. In February 1988 the NECC was restricted along with 16 other organisations.

Despite these restrictions, individual members of the NECC continued the activities of the organisation in black education. The NECC also aligned itself with the MDM. In 1989 a new front, the Mass Democratic Education Movement, which can be seen as the education wing of the MDM, was launched. In doing so the NECC "unbanned" itself. Ihron Rensburg was appointed general secretary. During this period black schools experienced crisis upon crisis. As a result of the disruption at schools (mainly of a political nature) the black youth is among the most politicized groups in South Africa. Restrictions on the NECC and many other organisations were lifted on 2 February

1990. But neither the lifting of restrictions nor calls from UDF and ANC leaders could stabilize the school situation. In December 1990 the NECC declared 1991 as "the year of mass education", saying that, along with the ANC, COSATU and the South African Democratic Teachers' Union, it planned to launch a campaign to normalize black education.

In 1990 the NECC changed its name to the National Education Coordinating Committee. According to Morde Tulwana, national chairman of the NECC, this formerly strong teaching body is at the crossroads. Since the unbanning of other teaching organisations in February 1990, the role of the NECC has never been spelt out clearly. Its future role is therefore uncertain.

Fronts

Unlike, the alliance which is an independent organisations, each with its own programs and campaigns dictated upon by the material conditions under which they operate in pursuance of the respective objectives and the constituencies they serve. However, despite this independence from each other, they do share a common vision of the future of South Africa they desire, and that vision is expressed through the NDR and its associated objectives of building a democratic, non-racial, and non-sexist prosperous society.

Lessons learnt from Comintern Policy: 1934 – 1939: United front in the wake of 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, Popular fronts forward the end of 1933 Counterrevolutionary fronts in Spain in the period of 1936 – 1939. After the World War II – Stalin and Trotsky period, Chilean Popular Front 1970, etc.

Education front is a coalition or convergence platform of the working-class formations and strata including liberal and social democratic ones, united by the need to transform education system and structure against the capitalist mode of production and/or apartheid system. More generally, it will be a platform or convergence against a common opponent.

The stand-alone education front should comprise of MDM structures, PYA, Alliance, Civic Society Organisations, Non-Government Organisations, Progressive Organisations and individuals (academics, activists, etc) SRCs, MECs and Ministers responsible for education, led by socialist-axis

Key Tasks of the Front

Establishment of the front will be regarded as a political centre purely that coordinates education and drive education campaign grounded by the feature of people's education at local, district, provincial and national level dictating policy changes responsive to the conditions of the working class and poor.

Shape education institutions to serve as centres of knowledge production that plays a meaningful role in the upliftment of both individuals and communities it serve.

The front should take full responsibility of being at the forefront of mobilising society through establishing organs of people's power in communities and in the sector as key drivers of education transformation in order to emphasize the interconnectedness of education struggles to that of the societal struggles particularly in this phase of the radical economic transformation.

Features of People's Education for People's Power

In this context, the education front should use these features as a yardstick to measure progress on education transformation in our country and work tirelessly toward achieving them as key drives of its education struggles.

- Destroying the backwardness of the apartheid system;
- Mass based education;
- Reaching-out to all the people of this country, be they young and old, in farms, town or cities;
- Not to serve the interest of the rich;
- Based on the actual experience of our people;
- Uncover the cultural heritage of our people;
- Unify the nation and pave the way for people's power (in control of both political and economic power)

Strategic Way Forward

NEHAWU must convene a broad meeting with PYA, Alliance, MDM structures, progressive organisations and individuals, civic society organisation, civic organisation, non-governmental organisations and government towards the convening of a national consultative meeting focussing on the formation of the education front in September 2023.

In November 2023, the national consultative meeting should take place to assess progress of the transformation of education against the features historically defines as people's education for people's power.

In April 2024, the launch of the Front must be realised by electing a national coordinating committee/team whose responsibility is to roll-out provincial launches in July to August 2024.

6. Outcomes of the National Education Committee

After robust and in-depth discussions, the meeting came into the following conclusions and way forward:

- a) The union must develop an education bulletin capturing the presentations, discussions and outcomes of this meeting which should be circulated next week, Wednesday, the 31st May 2023. We should further consider convening a press conference to outline the union national programme regarding the establishment of the education front after wide consultation with relevant and necessary organisations and structures pre-the workshop mentioned in b.
- b) The union should organise a workshop to be attended by SASCO, COSAS, YCLSA and COSATU Young Workers to focus on strengthen Student-Worker Alliance. In this regard, a team of three comrades made up of 1 from NEHAWU, SASCO & YCLSA should be established in order to prepare at the content level for the workshop in July 2023.
- c) The Task Team on Education made up of PDU, OSEC and Secretariat must work towards establishing the education front by ensuring the following:
- Convening of a broad meeting of PYA, Alliance, MDM structures, Progressive Organisations and individuals planning for the consultative meeting in September 2023.
 - Convene a national consultative meeting in November 2023.
 - Launch the education front in April 2024. This Task Team will be a preparatory team for the establishment of the front to support the General Secretary in implementing the decision of the CEC 2022.
 - These comrades must further identify other necessary role players in the band for their involvement and participation in the process toward the launch of the education front in South Africa.
- d) Provinces must convene their education committees in the period between June and July 2023 and national office in this regard will deploy to communicate the kind of discussions and outcomes of the national committee meeting held on the ...May 2023.
- e) The national union should resuscitate its battle of ideas focusing amongst others, on education and further encourage individual comrades to write articles particularly on education transformation but not limited to.
- f) The union should convene a workshop focusing on Innovation as a necessary task of the national union to venture into. In this regard, PDU and Professor Rasigan Maharaj should prepare for the workshop to be convened by end of June 2023.

End.