Ministerial Committee on Adult Education

July 2008

education

Department:
Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AET	Adult Education and Training
AETASA	Adult Educators and Trainers Association of South Africa
ALN	Adult Learning Network
ASECA	A Secondary Curriculum for Adults
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CHE	Council for Higher Education
CINDI	Children in Distress
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
DoA	Department of Agriculture
DoE	Department of Education
DoL	Department of Labour
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ETDP	Education Training and Development Practices
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance
FET	Further Education and Training
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
HE	Higher Education
HET	Higher Education and Training
HRD	Human Resources Development
IAAB	Interim ABET Advisory Board
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
LSM	Learning Support Material
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MLC	Mass Literacy Campaign
NABABET	National Advisory Board for Adult Basic Education and Training

NASA	Natal Adult Basic Education Support Agency
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NLC	National Literacy Cooperation
NLRD	National Learners' Record Database
NPO	Non-profit Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSCA	National Senior Certificate for Adults
NSDP	National Spatial Development Perspective
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSF	National Skills Fund
PALC	Public Adult Learning Centre
PAM	Personnel Administration Measures
PDE	Provincial Department of Education
QC	Quality Council
REQV	Relative Education Qualification Values
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SANLI	South African National Literacy Initiative
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
Umalusi	Council for General and Further Education and Training
UN	United Nations
WUS	World University Service

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Committee, I wish to thank the Minister of Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, for her guidance and direction but, most importantly, for challenging the Committee to be bold in its proposals.

We thank her for giving us the opportunity to contribute towards this enormous task of ensuring that our country is able to provide an opportunity to every adult in the country to learn and to acquire the skills that they need to function effectively as citizens of a democratic South Africa.

While we have not answered all the questions, we believe this discussion document will initiate a public conversation that will result in an improved adult education system for South Africa.

Our gratitude also goes to Ms Gugu Ndebele, DDG: Social and School Enrichment Branch; Ms Penny Vinjevold, DDG: Further Education and Training Branch; Mr Mzwandile Matthews and Mr David Diale from the Department of Education for sharing with us information pertaining to the work of their respective sections and for supporting the work of the Committee.

The work of the Committee also benefited immensely from inputs made by Dr Peliwe Lolwana, Chief Executive Officer at Umalusi, and Professor Veronica McKay, Chief Executive Officer of the newly launched Mass Literacy Programme, Kha Ri Gude.

The Independent Examinations Board willingly shared their examination data, which assisted us in shaping our understanding of the adult learners who are the ultimate beneficiaries of this initiative. The significant contribution made by Ms Kathy Watters and Mr Mandla Mthembu, by consolidating the different inputs into an initial draft for this discussion document, is acknowledged with great appreciation.

The Committee Secretariat, headed by Mr David Diale, did a fine job of organising the workings of what must have been one of the most difficult committees to run, due to the busy schedules of its members.

Time constraints precluded consultation with education and training stakeholders during the process of developing this discussion document and, as such, the views expressed and ideas presented in the document are those of the Committee and not those of the Department of Education or government as a whole.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank my fellow-committee members for the hard work they have put into the production of this discussion document.

Khulekani Mathe

Chairperson

1. The focus of this Green Paper is mainly on the formal adult education system, which falls within the Department of Education's ambit. It recognises the fact that the current policy context has favoured forms of adult education that are essentially formal in nature and aimed at assisting adults in obtaining a qualification. In addition to this rather narrow-focused policy, problems were experienced at the level of implementation, resulting in low levels of participation. Analysts argued that Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) had failed to gain recognition amongst both employers and learners, resulting in a poor reflection on the schooling system, and that those people who had tried to participate in it had found it to be too onerous to be worth the effort.

2. The Green Paper proposes a paradigm shift from "adult education" to "adult learning". This approach is in line with international trends and constitutes a lifelong learning framework, which is based on the fact that learning takes place throughout a person's life and in many forms. The shift signifies a move away from focusing only on the formal provision of education and training programmes to adults, to an approach that includes programmes, offering learning opportunities to adults, which are formal, informal and non-formal. In addition, the Green Paper recognises the dual mandate of adult learning to pursue both an economic and a social purpose. It furthermore defines adults as all the people living in South Africa who are over the age of 15 and, for the purpose of this Green Paper, all forms of learning up to Grade 12 are included, but higher education is excluded. This approach provides a vertical cut-off point at the end of the current further education and training band. There is no definable horizontal cut-off point, but there is an understanding that available resources would be focused on the areas where the greatest need for learning manifests itself.

3. Evolving from this particular view, <u>some key principles,</u> which are required for an effective adult learning policy, as well as for effective systems and efficient delivery, have been identified. These are underpinned by the principles of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which is aimed at creating an integrated national framework for learning achievements; facilitating access, mobility and progression; enhancing quality; accelerating redress; and contributing to the full personal development of each learner individually, as well as to the social and economic development of the nation at large. Other principles, which were combined to form the benchmarks that were used by the Committee, were drawn from national and international best practices.

4. A set of proposals is being presented for discussion by as wide a range of stakeholders and interested parties as possible, and relating to policy and the legislative environment; to funding frameworks; to the institutional landscape; to the human resources framework; to the curriculum and qualifications framework; and to governance. Proposals are being offered, pertaining to short and medium-term actions, so as to take the process that was started by the Green Paper forward to the next level.

Introduction

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Terms of Reference

5. On 25 July 2007, the Minister of Education, Honourable Naledi Pandor, MP established a Ministerial Committee to Draft a Green Paper on a Revamped Adult Education and Training System for South Africa. The Committee was given a time frame of four months expiring on 30 November 2007 to conclude its mandate. The time frame was later extended to 30 July 2008.

6. The terms of reference of the committee were established as follows:

(a) To draft the Adult Education and Training Green Paper for the Minister's Consideration.

(b) To investigate the nature, structure, content and relevance of the new Adult Education and Training qualifications and make recommendations after examining the following:

   i. the current institutional landscape;

   ii. the existing qualification and its relevance;

   iii. the need to consider articulation between programmes that relate to Basic Literacy, Formal Basic Education for Adults; Post Basic Education as well as Skill Based Programmes;

   iv. adult educator qualifications, provision and conditions of service; and

   v. financing of the current basic education for adults.

(c) To consider the legal implications for a new Adult Education and Training system, with particular regard to the current ABET Act (No. 52 of 2000)

(d) To make recommendations on relevant programmes to be offered by the Department of Education. This will include the appropriate providers for such programmes considering the current and possibly expanded institutional landscape.

(e) To review relevant international report on adult education and lifelong learning in making recommendations about a revamped AET system.

7. The time and resource constraints limited the work of the Committee to analysis of publicly available information and research.

1.2   Members of the Committee

8.   The Committee comprised the following people:

- Mr Khulekani Mathe: Chairman of the Committee and Senior Policy Analyst in the Presidency.
- Dr Stephanie Allais: Research Director: Umalusi.
- Mr Ivor Baatjes: Senior Lecturer: Centre for Adult Education, the School of Higher and Adult Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Prof. Shirley Walters: Director: Division for Lifelong Learning at the University of the Western Cape.
- Dr Pundy Pillay: Educational Economist: Research Triangle Institute.
- Mr Farrell Hunter: National Manager: Adult Learning Network.
- Mr David Diale: Head of the Committee's Secretariat and Director: Adult Education and Training: Department of Education.
- Mr Mzwandile Mathews: ex officio member and Chief Director: Department of Education.

9.   Support in drafting the report was provided by Ms Kathy Watters and Mr Mandla Mthembu acting as consultants.

1.3   Methodology

10. To produce this report, the Committee used the desktop research method, drawing on published research; analyses of government policy and legislation; internal reports by the Department of Education, budget information from the national Treasury; reports by international agencies; information provided by the Department of Labour to the Policy Unit in the Presidency, as a contribution to the Fifteen-Year Review; unpublished working papers developed by committee members; an analysis of Census 2001; and administrative data provided by the Department of Education and the Independent Examinations Board.

11. In addition, the Committee's understanding of pertinent issues, presenting themselves at different levels in the education system, was enhanced by inputs from the Directorate: Adult Education and Training, the FET Branch and the Mass Literacy Campaign run by the Department of Education.

12. Adult education and training is spread across all levels and sectors of society, but this report focuses on the state's provision for adult education at the level of general education and training, commonly referred to as Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET); as well as further education and training, commonly referred to as FET. This report analyses the ABET sector in terms of policy, the institutional landscape, levels of participation, the curriculum, human resources, funding, as well as governance frameworks, and offers broad proposals in terms of policy development. It uses well-documented information pertaining to the functioning of the ABET system to propose the key features for a revamped and expanded adult education system for South Africa.

13. There are debates about language use in describing this sector so, for clarification, in this report reference to ABET or ABE signifies general (NQF 1) and further adult education (up to NQF 4) within a framework of lifelong learning.

1.4   Context of the Report

14.   South Africa has a long history of finding innovative ways to provide adults with opportunities to learn. Gush and Walters (1998:77) describe how the first night schools, which were established in 1919, used a curriculum that focused on worker education, which consisted mainly of studying English and politics. Attempts to provide programmes, linked to qualifications, began as early as 1938 with the establishment of the African College by students from the University of Witwatersrand, with the emphasis on skills development. At the same time, a night school was established by the Church of England in Cape Town, which offered classes from an illiteracy level up to Standard 8 (Grade 10).

15.   Many changes have taken place over the intervening years, with attempts to regularise and formalise the system.

16.   In 1990, the National Education Co-ordinating Committee initiated a process of investigating all areas of education within South Africa in order to develop new policy options. This process was called the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), and it was based on a framework of values, derived from the ideals of the broad democratic movement. The five guiding principles were non-racism, non-sexism, democracy, a unitary system and redress. The framework report (NEPI 1993:11) argued that policy decisions would inevitably result in trade-offs between equity (improving the distribution of educational resources) and efficiency (maximising the rate of return on education investment).

17.   Issues of equity and efficiency, as well as the role of the state in the provision of adult education, as identified by NEPI, constituted the core of concerns that have resulted in this discussion document.   The Committee is aware of the need to identify enabling mechanisms, in order for the state to:

- •   provide adult education of high quality, which would enable adults to obtain a broad, general education;
- •   provide vocational training of high quality, which addresses the needs of industry, as well as other sectors of the economy;
- •   support non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations that offer flexible needs-based programmes, as well as skills programmes; and
- •   to create a supportive environment for recognising other forms of learning, including short skills courses, which serve a variety of learner needs in their immediate environment.

18.   In order to achieve these goals, this Green Paper proposes a conceptual shift from "adult education" to "adult learning". This approach is in line with international trends and incorporates a lifelong learning framework, which takes cognisance of the fact that learning takes place throughout a person's life and in many forms. This conceptual shift indicates the need to adopt an expanded view of learning that goes beyond, but does not preclude the formal provision of education and training programmes for adults. The end result would therefore include programmes, offering learning opportunities to adults that are both formal and informal, as well as non-formal. It is important to take cognisance of the fact that this approach is based on the understanding that learning does not just happen, but that it is requires a conducive environment that encourages, recognises, cultivates and supports many different forms of learning.

19.   Adult learning is understood to be embedded in the political, social, cultural and economic processes of society. Viewed from this perspective, adult learning could play an important role in enhancing the chances of both men and women surviving their harsh living conditions; in developing the skills of people in both the formal and informal

sectors of the economy; and in providing them with a cultural and political education that would encourage both men and women to participate actively in society via cultural organisations, social movements, political parties and trade unions.

20.   The new adult learning system will target all persons over the age of 16[1], who are not formally attending school or other institutions of learning.   It will include all forms of learning up to and including Grade 12, within a framework of lifelong learning, but will exclude higher education. This approach provides a vertical cut-off at the end of the current Further Education and Training (FET) band. There is, however, no definable horizontal cut-off point, but there is the acknowledgement that resources would be focused on areas with the greatest learning needs.

1.5   Outline of the Report

21.   This report comprises four main sections, which pertain to the main areas of investigation outlined in the Terms of Reference:

- Firstly, it provides an overview of benchmarks in adult education as a perspective from which to view provision and good practice in a South African context. The following areas are considered: the policy and legislative environment; funding; the institutional landscape; the human resources framework; the qualifications and curriculum framework; and programme design and delivery.

- Secondly, it maps out the policy intentions and current status of adult education and training (AET) in terms of the following perspectives: the adult learners whom it is intended to address, using demographic data originating from Census 2001 (Statistics South Africa) and additional administrative data from various institutions; the policy and legislative framework; funding; the institutional landscape; the human resources framework; the qualifications and curriculum framework; and the governance framework. Governance is not dealt with any great detail in this report, as a more cohesive approach is for "form to follow function", in that governance can be better conceptualised once a new adult education framework is in place.

- Thirdly, it provides a critical discussion of current practices and frameworks of policy and legislation; of funding; of the institutional landscape; of human resources; of the qualifications and curriculum framework; and of governance.

- Fourthly, it offers broad proposals with regard to policy direction for the revamped and expanded AET system for South Africa.

- Finally, it outlines a set of steps to be taken next, which are necessary to take some of the proposals forward.

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1   The definition of an 'adult' which is used in the Adult Basic Education and Training Act (No. 52 of 2000) is used in this discusssion document merely for purposes of determining the scope. Therefore, an adult is any person over the age of 16.

2. BENCHMARKS TO CONSIDER FOR A NEW ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING (AET) FRAMEWORK

2. BENCHMARKS TO CONSIDER FOR A NEW ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING (AET) FRAMEWORK

22.   This paper takes cognisance of the fact that the current policy context has favoured forms of adult education that are essentially formal in nature and aimed at obtaining a qualification. In addition to this narrow-focused policy, problems were experienced at the implementation stage, resulting in low levels of participation. Analysts have argued that ABET failed to gain recognition amongst both employers and learners, and that those people who tried to participate in it found it to be too onerous to be worth the effort.

23.   This Green Paper proposes a paradigm shift from "adult education" to "adult learning". This approach is in line with international trends and constitutes a lifelong learning framework, which is based on the fact that learning takes place throughout a person's life and in many forms. The shift signifies a move away from focusing only on the formal provision of education and training programmes to adults, to an approach that includes programmes, offering learning opportunities to adults, which are formal, informal and non-formal. In addition, the Green Paper recognises the dual mandate of adult learning to pursue both an economic and a social purpose. It furthermore defines adults as all the people living in South Africa who are over the age of 15 and, for the purpose of this Green Paper, all forms of learning up to Grade 12 are included, but higher education is excluded. This approach provides a vertical cut-off point at the end of the current further education and training band. There is, however, no definable horizontal cut-off point, but there is an understanding that available resources would be focused on the areas where the greatest need for learning manifests itself.

24.   Evolving from this particular view, *some key principles,* which are required for an effective adult learning policy, as well as for effective systems and efficient delivery, have been identified[2]. These are underpinned by the principles of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which is aimed at creating an integrated national framework for learning achievements; facilitating access, mobility and progression; enhancing quality; accelerating redress; and contributing to the full personal development of each learner individually, as well as to the social and economic development of the nation at large.

2.1   The Policy and Legislative Environment

25.   Governments have the leading responsibility with regard to ensuring the right to adult education and training, as well as with regard to providing leadership, policy frameworks, an enabling environment, and the necessary resources.

26.   This requires collaboration and participation by government ministries in the form of:

27.   inter-ministerial partnerships, ensuring cooperation across all the relevant ministries, as well as links to all the relevant developmental programmes; and

28.   intra-ministerial partnerships within the Ministry of Education.

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2   These principles have been derived from several sources including the following:
- Writing the Wrongs: International Benchmarks on Adult Literacy (2005), UNESCO/ EFA Global Monitoring Report.
- Lind, A (2007). *Literacy for All: Making a Difference*, and via personal communication with Agneta Lind, at the ADEA Conference, Maputo, May 2008.
- Personal communication with Kathy Watters, at the ADEA Conference, Maputo, May 2008.
- Information from a PowerPoint presentation by Timothy Ireland, entitled *Building a National Platform and South-South Co-operation*, at the ADEA Conference, Maputo, January 2008.

29. Government must take the lead by engaging with the broader community, forming partnerships, and collaborating with:

30. international agencies;

31. local governments;

32. NGOs and civil society organisations with the necessary experience;

33. business and workplace organisations; and

34. by ensuring links between all these agencies, especially at a local level.

35. An enabling environment ensures relevance to the issues in learners' lives by:

36. allowing flexible implementation of policies to be flexibly implemented via decentralised and coordinated partnerships amongst different state and civil society stakeholders; and

37. by promoting the decentralisation of both budgets and decision-making, so as to facilitate flexible delivery, choice of curriculum, and the application of locally relevant methods and materials.

38. Government must take the lead in stimulating the market with regard to the production and distribution of a wide variety of materials suitable for new readers – for example by working with publishers/producers of newspapers.

39. It is a pre-requisite that political will is exerted within the context of broader educational and socio-economic development interventions, at national, provincial and local level. This encompasses:

40. the inclusion of adult education and literacy in strategic plans;

41. actively promoting a culture of learning "from womb to tomb";

42. making broad efforts, so as to create literate environments in the relevant languages; and

43. canvassing community support and commitment at local level.

44. To ensure adult learning of high quality and make adequate provision for adult learning, as well as ensuring greater accountability being shown by government, by providers and by learners, it is important to invest in ongoing monitoring and evaluation systems with appropriate feedback mechanisms. This could be achieved via the systematisation of data and by strategic research.

45. The policy framework takes cognisance of, and makes allowances for the need for growth in a system aimed at adult learning.

2.2 Funding

46. Funding is required for formal, non-formal as well as informal adult learning programmes.

47. State budget allocations are therefore required, allowing for adequate human, material and financial resources at provincial level.

48. Commitment on the part of provincial and local government structures, to the allocation of budgeted funding to approved service providers is pivotal to effective implementation of adult learning initiatives.

2.3   The Institutional Landscape

49.   A wide range of institutions is required for the delivery of adult learning programmes – from schools and FET colleges, to the workplace, community centres and halls, as well as to more informal settings to accommodate learner needs and formal, non-formal and informal learning programmes.

2.4   The Human Resource Framework

50.   To attract and retain educators, it is important that there are acceptable conditions of service for educators in place. For example, that they are paid at least the equivalent of the minimum wage of a primary school teacher for all hours worked (including time for training, preparation and follow-up).

51.   A policy framework for the professional development of adult educators at all levels and across all sectors needs to be in place. This includes the initial training of educators, as well as continual professional development opportunities, which could be accessed by educators country-wide – via distance education for example.

52.   Support systems for educators are important. These can take the form of access to information, reading material, newspapers and other media, as well as computers. Opportunities for exchanges with other adult educators provide a valuable support network, which can further enhance professional development.

53.   The recruitment of educators from the local community could emphasise the relevance of adult learning for local issues.

2.5   The Qualifications and Curriculum Framework

54.   Formal, non-formal, as well as informal adult learning programmes are essential to the development of a system of lifelong learning.

55.   Curriculum guidelines are important, but allowance should be made for flexible application of these guidelines in a local context, so as to ensure social and cultural relevance. Alternative curricula could facilitate access for adult learners

56.   There should be a commitment to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to enable adults to enter a trajectory of lifelong learning. This requires sufficient funding to implement RPL systems, as well as flexibility in the assessment of policies and systems.

57.   Adequate learning support for adult learners, by means of guidance and counselling, both in RPL and programme contexts, is essential for the completion of their studies.

58.   Furthermore, adequate guidance of, and counselling for learners are necessary to enable them to negotiate their way through learning opportunities and institutions .

2.6   Programme Design and Delivery

59.   In a multi-lingual context it is important at all stages for learners to be able to choose their language of tuition. Active efforts to encourage and sustain bilingual tuition can be made by a careful choice of the language of instruction, as well as attention to the transition from mother-tongue to mainstream/official languages.

60.   A wide range of participatory methods in the learning process ensures active engagement by learners. Training in the use of these participatory methods and processes needs to be included at all levels of training and continuing professional development of educators.

61.   Learning programme content needs to be relevant and enjoyable for learners.

62.   The availability of appropriate learning support material is essential for the adequate provision of education. This includes adaptation and grading of teaching and learning materials in accordance with learners' interests and prior skills (textbooks, real literacy materials, radio, TV and other media).

63.   Programme timetables need to be flexible to take into account the daily lives of learners while, at the same time, provide for regular and sustained contact (twice a week for at least two years).

64.   Gender and demographic equity is an important consideration in delivery, as are the different physical and mental abilities of learners.

65.   There should be a ratio of at least one facilitator to 30 learners and at least one trainer/ supervisor to 15 learner groups (1 to 10 in remote areas), ensuring a minimum of one support visit per month.

66.   Finally, although the language used for these international benchmarks tends to have a bias towards adult literacy, their substance is applicable to adult learning at all levels. As such, they form the basis of this analysis of the South African adult education and training system and guide the policy proposals put forward in this discussion document.

3. THE CURRENT STATUS AND FRAMEWORK FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

3. THE CURRENT STATUS AND FRAMEWORK FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

3.1 The Adult Learners

67. Very little has been written about the possible identities of this group of South African adults. Are the majority of them women? How old are they? Where do they live? Are they employed? What skills and interests do they have? Are they mostly young people, who have dropped out of school and are looking for a "second chance" to complete their schooling, in order to obtain gainful employment? Are they mid-career people who want their prior learning to be recognised as an accreditation that will give them access to further/higher/other education programmes? Do they want or need a qualification or are they interested in learning for other reasons?

68. It is necessary to establish a profile of these learners and their participation in AET as a basis for considering possibilities for reviewing and expanding South Africa's adult education system.

69. It must be noted that some of the available data is unreliable and that more consistent monitoring is required in order to obtain a clearer understanding of the sector. A case study of adult learners who participated in the ABET Levels 1 to 4 Independent Examinations Board (IEB) examinations during the period April 2007 to May 2008, is attached as Appendix A. This case study makes a valuable contribution in assisting with the profiling of learners in this particular general education band. It also provides initial insights into how the current system has succeeded or failed in enabling a certain kind of learner to participate. It is important to note that adult learners, who write IEB examinations, are generally from centres run by the private sector, NGOs and other government departments, but not from public adult learning centres run by the Department of Education. Therefore, while the results of the analysis of the IEB examinations data are useful, they do not reflect the situation in public adult learning centres.

70. Figures that provide some understanding of the numbers of adult learners nationally have been obtained from the Census 2001 data.

71. According to the census data, there were 44 819 777 people living in South Africa in 2001. As the table below indicates, 30 454 490 (68%) of these people were over the age of 15 and they will be regarded for the purposes of this Green Paper as "adult" and will therefore become part of our focus.

Table 1: Number and % of people living in South Africa in 2001

Age	Total population by age	% population by age
0-14	14 365 287	32.1 %
15-24	9 276 244	20.7 %
25-34	7 275 840	16.2 %
35-44	5 691 235	12.7 %
45-54	3 725 400	8.3 %
55-64	2 270 560	5.1 %
>65	2 215 211	4.9 %
Total	44 819 777	100.0 %
Total+15	*30 454 490*	*67.9 %*

72. How many of the 30 454 490 people in South Africa, who are over the age of 15, have never attended school or completed less than a Grade 9 level of education and could therefore be considered as "functionally illiterate"? The age 15 is used in the analysis as being closest to the 16 years which, according to the ABET Act, No. 52 of 2000, defines the youngest adult. Table 2 indicates that nearly half of the people (14 609 975) over the age of 15 completed a lower than Grade 9 level of education, and nearly one third (9 600 816) had completed a level less than Grade 7 in 2001. Slightly fewer than two million people from this group are under the age of 24 and could still have been be attending school in 2001.

Table 2: Number and % of people in SA in 2001 over 15 years with less than Gr. 7 by age range

Age in years	Total population by age	No. in each age range over 15 yrs with < Gr. 7	% of each age range over 15 yrs with < Gr. 7	No. in each age range over 15 yrs with < Gr. 9	% of each age range over 15 yrs with < Gr. 9
15-24	9 276 244	1 607 510	17.3 %	3 491 744	37.6 %
25-34	7 275 840	1 598 188	22.0 %	2 491 894	34.2 %
35-44	5 691 235	2 030 255	35.7 %	2 944 598	51.7 %
45-54	3 725 400	1 736 688	46.6 %	2 419 932	65.0 %
55-64	2 270 560	1 224 894	53.9 %	1 588 126	69.9 %
>65	2 215 211	1 403 281	63.3 %	1 673 681	75.6 %
Total +15	**30 454 490**	**9 600 816**	**31.5 %**	**14 609 975**	**48.0 %**

Source: StatsSA

73. Table 2 indicates that, in 2001:

- A total of 31.5% of people in South Africa, who were over 15 years of age, had completed a level lower than grade 7.
- A total of 48 % of people in South Africa, who were over 15 years of age, had completed a level lower than grade 9.
- The age range with the smallest percentage is the 15 to 24-year group, as 17.3% of the people in this age group had completed a level lower than grade 7 in 2001, although this represents a large number of people (1.6 million and 3.5 million respectively).
- The oldest age group, namely those over the age of 65, has the largest percentage (65%) of people with a level lower than grade 7, while with a level lower than Grade 9, the number stands at 76% although this represents 1.4 million and 1.6 million people with less than grade 7 and with grade 9.

74. If one takes the age range of 15 to 44 as the group most likely to be interested in still completing their education (and this is debatable, as 15 to 55 might be a more accurate grouping), then one has a group of 5.2 million people if one uses a Grade 7 cut-off, or 8.9 million if one uses a Grade 9 cut-off. If the age range is expanded from 15 to 55 the number of candidate learners increases to 6.9 million and 11.3 million respectively.

75. The Department of Education has recently launched Kha Ri Gude, a mass literacy campaign, targeting an estimated 4.7 million adults with no form of schooling. This leaves more or less an additional 10 million adults with some form of education, albeit at a level lower than Grade 9. This figure excludes those who completed Grade 9 but did not complete Grade 12. The number of candidates for the expanded adult education system increases when those who did not complete Grade 12 are included.

76.	To illustrate, it is estimated that some 1 200 000 learners enter Grade 1 every year. Less than half sit for the Senior Certificate examinations 12 years later (See Table 3 below), of whom an average of 60% pass and obtain a Senior Certificate. A small proportion of those who pass – some estimates put this figure at 80 000 learners – obtain results which ensure them possible entry into the higher education arena.

77.	Some of those who drop out after Grade 9, as well as those who either fail matric or pass but obtain poor results, enter the FET sector; the headcount enrolment of which is estimated to be 400 000 per annum. This leaves a large number of adults whose educational needs are not catered for.

Table 3: Senior Certificate candidates and pass rates 1995 - 2007

Year	Candidates	Passes	Pass rate	Higher Grade Math passes
1995	531453	283742	53.4	29475
1996	513868	279487	54.4	22416
1997	558970	264795	47.4	19575
1998	552384	272488	49.3	20130
1999	511159	249831	48.9	19854
2000	489298	283294	57.9	19327
2001	449332	277206	61.7	19504
2002	443765	305774	68.9	20528
2003	440096	322492	73.3	23412
2004	467890	330717	70.7	24143
2005	508180	347184	68.3	26383
2006	527950	351503	66.6	25217
2007	564381	368217	65.2	25415

Source: The Presidency, Development Indicators, 2008.

## 3.2	The Policy and Legislative Environment

### 3.2.1	Intention of Policy

78.	Post-apartheid adult education policy is guided by the ANC's Freedom Charter and the UN's Declaration of Human Rights, and is based on the individual's right to education, as enshrined in the Constitution. As such, it therefore has a very strong equity bias, but there is an equally strong commitment to quality, evinced in the plethora of legislation, policies and institutions tasked with quality assurance and standards.

79.	The integration of education and training is another key policy thrust of post-apartheid education.

3.2.2 Policy and Legislation

80.   The legislation and policy of the post-apartheid state, insofar as education and training are concerned, include:[3]

81.   The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996, section 29 (1) states that everyone in South Africa has the right to basic education, including adult basic education.

82.   The South African Qualifications Authority Act, No. 58 of 1995, provides for the creation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which establishes the scaffolding of a national learning system that integrates education and training at all levels.

83.   The National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996, is designed to identify the policy, legislative and monitoring responsibilities of the Minister of Education, and to formalise relations between national and provincial authorities.

84.   The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996, promotes access, quality and democratic governance in the schooling system. It ensures that all learners have access to quality education, without discrimination, and makes schooling compulsory for children aged 7 to 15 or learners reaching Grade 9, whichever occurs first.

85.   The South African Council for Educators Act, 2000, makes provision for the establishment of the Council to undertake the registration of educators, promote the professional development of educators and set, maintain and protect ethical and professional standards for educators.

86.   The Further Education and Training Act, 1998 (No.98 of 1998), the Education White Paper 4 on Further Education and Training (1998), and the National Strategy for Further Education and Training (1991 – 2001), provide the basis for developing a nationally coordinated system, comprising the secondary component of schooling and technical colleges.

87.   The Further Education and Training Colleges Act, 2006 (No. 16 of 2006), makes provision for the regulation of further education and training, the establishment of governance and the funding of public further education and training colleges, the registration of private FET colleges and promoting quality in further education and training.

88.   The Adult Basic Education and Training Act, 2000 (No 52 of 2000), makes provision for the establishment of public and private adult learning centres, funding for ABET provisioning, the governance of public centres, and quality assurance mechanisms for the sector.

89.   The Education White Paper on Early Childhood Development (2000), makes provision for the participation of 5-year-olds in pre-school reception grade education by 2010.

90.   The Education White Paper on Inclusive Education (2001), explains the intention of the Department to implement inclusive education at all levels in the system.

91.   The General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act, 2001 (No.58 of 2001), makes provision

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3   This overview of policy and legislation is taken from the South African National Report on the Development and State of the Art of Adult Learning and Education, June 2008.

for the establishment of Umalusi, which is responsible for the provision of quality assurance in general and further education and training, for issuing certificates at exit points, for control over norms and standards of curricula assessment, and for conducting the assessment.

92.   The National Norms and Standards for Funding Adult Learning Centres (2007), Gazette 30576, makes provision for the norms and standards pertaining to the funding of public adult learning centres and the granting of subsidies to private centres.

93.   The NQF aims to create an integrated national framework for learning achievements; to facilitate access, mobility and progression; to enhance quality; and to accelerate redress and contribute to the full personal development of each learner and of the social and economic development of the nation at large.[4]

94.   South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA 2000) comprises three focal areas, namely standard setting, quality assurance and the electronic management of learner achievements via the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD). In 2007, the Departments of Labour and Education issued a policy statement, directing that, in future, the standard setting and quality assurance functions of SAQA will be transferred to three Quality Councils, namely the Quality Council for Higher Education (CHE), the Quality Council for General and Further Education (Umalusi) and a new Quality Council for Trades and Occupations.

95.   The Human Resources Developmental (HRD) Strategy (2001), is a joint initiative of the Departments of Labour and Education, aimed at reinforcing the establishment of an integrated education, training and development strategy, in order to harness the potential of adult learners. The HRD Strategy is currently being reviewed.

96.   The National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) is supported by two Acts, namely the Skills Development Act, 1998 (No.97 of 1998), and the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (No. 9 of 1999). These Acts introduced new institutions, programmes and funding policies, with the objective of equipping South Africa with the skills needed to succeed in the global market, and to present opportunities to individuals and communities for self-advancement, so as to enable them to play a productive role in society.

97.   There are 31 registered Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQAs) bodies, of which 25 are Sectoral Education and Training Authorities.

98.   Although not exhaustive, the above list confirms that South Africa has a very comprehensive policy and legislative framework for education and training. It is important to note that these pieces of legislation attempt to maintain a delicate balance between the pursuit of the goals of equity and efficiency. However, there is always a gap between good policy intentions and reality, and some of the major problem areas arise due to the difficulties experienced with the implementation of policy.

99.   A critical discussion of the policy and legislative framework, as it applies to the subject of this report, is provided in Section 3.

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4   Full text in Parker and Walters (2008:72).

3.3   Funding

3.3.1 Intention of Policy

100.   The aim of the funding policy is to provide resources to support the attainment of government objectives insofar as adult education is concerned. The policy should ensure a uniform funding of adult education on an equitable and predictable basis.

101.   Section 21(1) of the ABET Act, 2000 (No. 52 of 2000), obliges the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) to fund public adult basic education and training on a fair, equitable and transparent basis. Section 21(3) of the Act stipulates that the MEC must provide adequate provision of information to public centres, regarding the funding of these centres, on an annual basis, in order to enable them to prepare their budgets.

3.3.2 What Currently Prevails

102.   The total allocation of government resources to all forms of adult learning is difficult to identify. It is also possible that much of it is buried under other funding categories. However, there are two clearly identifiable areas, namely the ABET directorates in the provincial and national education departments, and the funds paid via payroll tax into the National Skills Fund (NSF).

Department of Education's funding of ABET

103.   Table 4 indicates the range of actual Rands allocated to ABET by the different provincial education departments between 2003/04 and 2006/07, as well the percentage of the total education budget that these amounts represents. The table indicates that it is not necessarily the "more affluent" provinces that allocated more money. Actually, until recently, the Eastern Cape has allocated more money that any other province. Gauteng is currently investing the largest amount of money while, in contrast, the Western Cape constantly allocated one of the smallest amounts of money to ABET.

Table 4: Provincial spending on ABET from 2003 – 2007

Province	2003/04		2004/05		2005/06		2006/07	
	Amount (Rm)	% of educ. budget	Amount (Rm)	% of educ. budget	Amount (Rm)	% of educ. budget	Amount (Rm)	% of educ. budget
E. Cape	136.3	1.3	126.0	1.2	136.3	1.2	155.8	1.2
Free State	70.9	1.7	45.8	1.0	93.2	1.9	65.4	1.2
Gauteng	118.1	1.2	138.8	1.4	157.8	1.5	168.1	1.4
KZN	39.6	0.3	49.7	0.4	85.8	0.6	72.6	0.5
Limpopo	28.6	0.3	36.7	0.4	54.1	0.5	50.2	0.4
Mpumalanga	48.9	1.1	53.7	1.1	76.0	1.3	75.5	1.2
N. Cape	21.6	1.7	19.6	1.4	20.0	1.3	23.5	1.4
N. West	54.2	1.1	44.3	0.9	63.6	1.1	83.3	1.2
W. Cape	18.5	0.4	21.2	0.4	23.1	0.4	23.5	0.3
Total	536.7	1.01	535.8	0.91	709.9	1.09	717.9	0.98

Source: Pillay (2008:1). Original source: National Treasury, 2007. Provincial Budgets and Expenditure Review, 2003/04 – 2009/10.

105.   Table 5 summarises the budget for ABET by province over a period of four years, namely 2003/04 – 2006/07, and the projected amount for three years, namely 2007/08 – 2009/10.

Table 5: Summary of provincial spending on ABET 2003/04 – 2006/07 and projected provincial spending for 2007/8 – 2009/10

Province	2003/07	2008/10
	4 years	3 years
	Amount (Rm)	Amount (Rm)
Eastern Cape	554.4	486.8
Free State	275.3	226.3
Gauteng	582.8	772.3
KwaZulu-Natal	247.7	343.6
Limpopo	169.6	372.3
Mpumalanga	254.1	278.1
Northern Cape	84.7	82.3
North West	245.4	325.1
Western Cape	86.3	82.1
Total	2 500.3	2 968.9
Annual average	625.08 (actual)	989.63 (projected)

106.   Table 6 indicates the large disparity in ABET allocations between the different provinces. Gauteng and the Eastern Cape allocated considerably more than other provinces, such as the Northern and Western Cape. A large proportion of the funds go towards the funding of public centres (94% in 2005/06, and 95% in 2006/07).

107.   While the two tables above indicate the relative spending of provinces on ABET, they do not indicate to what extent the budget allocation matches the relative need in each province. The following table uses the figures quoted in the final report of the Ministerial Committee on Literacy, based on Census 2001 figures. An average of the amount budgeted by each province for the four years from 2003 to 2007 was then compared to the estimated number of learners in each province.

Table 6: Comparison by province of amount spent on potential adult learners

Province	2003 to 2007		Potential number of adult learners			Allocation per potential learner
	Total amount in Rands	Average per year in Rands	No schooling	Gr. 1 to 6	Total	
E. Cape	554 400 000	138 600 000	778 203	845 637	1 623 840	85.4
Free State	275 300 000	68 825 000	257 140	394 615	651 755	105.6
Gauteng	582 800 000	145 700 000	515 747	742 864	1 258 611	115.8
KZN	247 700 000	61 925 000	1 145 395	1 018 139	2 163 534	28.6
Limpopo	169 600 000	42 400 000	461 508	1 320 189	1 781 697	23.8
M/langa	254 100 000	63 525 000	468 747	328 031	796 778	79.7
N. Cape	84 700 000	21 175 000	91 305	116 296	207 601	102.0
N. West	245 400 000	61 350 000	437 791	497 588	935 379	65.6
W. Cape	86 300 000	21 575 000	167 618	475 461	643 079	33.5
Total	2 500 300 000	625 075 000	4 323 454	5 738 820	10062 274	62.1

Source: MCL final report 2007, Pillay 2008.

108. While the analysis is admittedly crude, Table 6 does indicate that:

- Gauteng budgeted the highest amount in actual Rands, as well as per potential learner during this time period.
- KZN and Limpopo allocated less than a quarter of the amount allocated by Gauteng.

109. The data on the actual number of learners that are reached year is very unreliable. There are data gaps for some of the years. However, by using the available data, an average number of learners reached during each year was calculated, in order to compute per capita expenditure for the different provinces.

Table 7: Average per capita expenditure by province 2003 – 2006

Province	Ave number of learners reached	2003/04		2004/05		2005/06		2006/07	
		Amount (Rm)	Ave exp. per learner	Amount (Rm)	Ave exp. per learner	Amount (Rm)	Ave exp. per learner	Amount (Rm)	Ave exp. per learner
E. Cape	46177	136.3	2952	126	2729	136.3	2952	155.8	3374
Free State	27411	70.9	2587	45.8	1671	93.2	3400	65.4	2386
Gauteng	65937	118.1	1791	138.8	2105	157.8	2393	168.1	2549
KZN	12002	39.6	3299	49.7	4141	85.8	7149	72.6	6049
Limpopo	32737	28.6	874	36.7	1121	54.1	1653	50.2	1533
Mpumalanga	16535	48.9	2957	53.7	3248	76	4596	75.5	4566
N. Cape	5349	21.6	4038	19.6	3664	20	3739	23.5	4393
N. West	29520	54.2	1836	44.3	1501	63.6	2155	83.3	2822
W. Cape	29007	18.5	638	21.2	731	23.1	796	23.5	810
Total		536.7		535.8		709.9		717.9	

Source: Own calculations from EMIS data. Budget data from National Treasury, 2007. Provincial Budgets and Expenditure Review, 2003/04 – 2009/10.

110. Assuming that the data is correct, Table 7 indicates that the per capita expenditure varied considerably according to province. For example, the Eastern Cape spent more than three times the amount spent by Western Cape per learner. The data for KZN is the most problematic, as one figure – very low for the size of the province – is used for all years.

111. These provincial variations could partially be explained by the representation of learners in terms of different levels in the data. For example, ABET Levels 3 and 4 are generally more expensive than the first two levels. The key cost-drivers are staff compensation and learner support materials. Therefore, the more learners a province has at a higher level, the higher that province's per capita expenditure would be, and vice versa. Also, very little is known about the efficiency of provincial expenditure. While some provinces are spending relatively large amounts on ABET, little is known about the quality of the outcomes obtained with this expenditure.

Kha Ri Gude Literacy Campaign

1. This is a mass literacy campaign being undertaken by the Department of Education. The strategy aims to reach 4.7 million illiterates (those who have never been to school) and 4.9 million functionally illiterates (those who dropped out of school before Grade 7) by the end of 2012. Meeting these targets will enable South Africa to meet the commitment made in Dakar to reduce illiteracy by at least 50 percent by 2015, as well as to be declared "free from illiteracy" by UNESCO. A preliminary costing of R5. 47 billion was made for the period 2007 to 2012, which is a cost of close to R1 300 per learner.

2. The campaign, known as the Kha Ri Gude, was launched during May 2008. with an initial target of 300 000 learners. Disabled learners were specifically targeted. Volunteer facilitators received ten days of training and will receive a stipend. Learner books were produced in all 11 official languages of South Africa, as well as sign language, using a teaching method that combines language experience and phonic methods. The programme comprises seven themes, which includes numeracy skills.

3. The Director of the campaign, Veronica Mackay predicts that five months from May 2008 and every month subsequent to that, there will be significant numbers of learners seeking ABET Level 2 learning programmes.

4. This is a major achievement for the Minister of Education, as there were two previous attempts during the last 12 years to fast-track adult literacy initiatives, with limited results. This is the first time that the Treasury is allocating serious funding for adult literacy purposes.

5. However, a caveat is that consideration needs to be given to the opportunities for progress that are available to learners after completion of their studies. Initiatives like this cannot be implemented piecemeal and without clarity regarding further learning possibilities in future- hence this discussion document on a revamped and expanded adult education and training system for South Africa

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Department of Labour's funding of the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)

112. Tables 8 and 9 respectively indicate the funds paid via payroll tax into the NSF and the SETAs. It is evident that these institutions receive substantial funding for their training activities. For instance, the total revenue of the NSF for 2006/07 stood at R1.23 billion and is projected to increase to almost R1.5 billion by 2009/10. Similarly, the total SETA revenue reached nearly R5 billion in 2006/07 from R3.6 billion in 2003/04 and it is projected to increase to R5.7 billion in 2009/10.

113. The revenue being generated annually for the NSF and the SETAs, is equivalent to half of the public funding for

the higher education sector. However, there are serious reservations about whether the NSF and the SETAs are achieving appropriate outcomes in AET.

Table 8: Revenue of the National Skills Fund (Rm)

Year	Skills development levies	Other revenue (e.g. interest)	Transfers received	Total revenue
2003/04	755.4	134.7	36.2	926.3
2004/05	945.1	97.8	38.0	1080.9
2005/06	976.7	102.8	40.3	1119.7
2006/07	1100.0	85.6	42.7	1228.3
2007/08	1200.0	75.0	44.8	1319.8
2008/09	1300.0	60.0	46.9	1406.9
2009/10	1365.0	40.0	49.3	1454.3

Source: National Treasury, 2007a.

Table 9: Revenue & Expenditure of the Sector Education and Training Authorities (Rm)

Year	Revenue	Expenditure	Surplus (deficit)
2003/04	3593.5	2859.0	735.5
2004/05	4451.5	4270.2	181.3
2005/06	4634.5	4776.4	(141.9)
2006/07	4778.3	5060.1	(281.8)
2007/08	5171.5	5730.8	(559.3)
2008/09	5448.3	5965.1	(516.8)
2009/10	5727.8	6233.3	(505.5)

Source: National Treasury, 2007a.

3.4   The Institutional Landscape

3.4.1 Intention of Policy

114.   The intention of the policy is to facilitate access to learning opportunities for the great many people who need such opportunities. To achieve this goal, the choice of institutional base for adult education must satisfy the conditions of physical accessibility and availability for use by adult learners at appropriate times.

115.   Given the widespread availability of school infrastructure, this was identified as the principal institutional base for adult education provided by the Department of Education. Further Education and Training colleges comprise the principal institutional base for vocational education. Skills development under the auspices of the Department of Labour does not have a single institutional base – a situation that has been heavily criticised by some education and training analysts.

3.4.2 *What Currently Prevails*

116. ABET is currently provided by the State, as well as by business, industry and civil society organisations. State provision is provided mainly via a system of Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs) in the nine provincial departments of education (PDEs), but a number of other government departments also provide ABET programmes on a much smaller scale and mainly to their own employees.

117. Over the past ten years, the State has become the major provider of ABET, followed by the business sector. However, within the different PDEs, ABET occupies an obscure position. In some instances it is a subdirectorate and competes for the attention of the director with other programmes. If the adult education system described in this report is to become a reality, this situation will have to change at all levels.

118. The involvement of the NGO sector, which used to play a leading role in respect of ABET, decreased sharply since 1997, and it has been gradually replaced by private/commercial providers.

119. PALCs, historically better-known as "night schools", are the key sites for AET provision and delivery in the provinces. PALCs provide learning opportunities to adults from basic literacy to matric, using the infrastructure of primary or secondary schools.

120. AET programmes are mainly offered on a part-time basis during the afternoons and early evenings from Mondays to Thursdays. Over the past ten years, PDEs gradually introduced ABET programmes across all four levels. The curriculum focused predominantly on language and numeracy until 1998, when new learning areas were introduced. By the end of 2006, PALCs provided a variety of programmes across 12 subfields of learning. However, as indicated in the analysis of learner participation in the IEB examinations, language and numeracy are still predominantly subjects taken by majority of learners.

121. ABET is a relatively new programme for PDEs, and data remains unreliable and incomplete, despite the introduction of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) in 1999. Since 1999, data from PALCs has been collected in a similar way as for schools, but some PDEs continue to collect the data in an inadequate way, which is often difficult to recover and often completely lost. This explains the missing data entries in data sets provided by the DoE. Although data collection has always been done by the PDEs, since 2003, the national Department of Education, via its EMIS unit, has taken responsibility for this.

122. Notwithstanding the problems with the reliability of data, data sets from the DoE's EMIS unit are used to provide an overview of the provision and delivery of ABET in the nine provinces.

Table 10: Number of Public Adult Learning Centres 2002 – 2006

Province	Year				
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Eastern Cape	256	142	142	307	299
Free State	211	219	285	209	208
Gauteng	210	224	224	53	50
KwaZulu-Natal	139	139	139	139	139
Limpopo	369	516	567	597	565
Mpumalanga	137	119	274	272	297
North West	171	189	189	182	140
Northern Cape	117	136	136	136	153
Western Cape	285	249	383	383	325
Total	**1895**	**1933**	**2339**	**2278**	**2176**

Source: Department of Education, 2008[5]

123. The actual number of PALCs in South Africa remains difficult to estimate. Table 10 shows a big variation from one year to another, indicating a significant level of instability (and/or unreliability of data), which impacts directly on funding.

124. There are three main reasons that explain the lack of accuracy and the fluctuation in numbers where this occurs. Firstly, many PALCs consist of main centres and satellite centres, and the latter are often counted as main centres. Secondly, PALCs operate on the basis of the number of learners who register for classes. Therefore, some PALCs might fail to reopen on the basis of an inadequate number of learners. Finally, a lack of funding is often linked to the number of PALCs in a province. Cases have been reported of the closing down of PALCs in the provinces before the end of the academic year, due to funding constraints. For instance, all PALCs in Richmond, KwaZulu-Natal were temporarily closed in 2003, as well as some in the Limpopo Province. Similar experiences were recorded in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape in 1998 (Aitchison et al., 2000). More focused attention on ABET data is required in order to get a more accurate picture of PALCs.

125. Other government departments play a much smaller role in the provision of ABET. In cases where ABET is provided, the focus is usually on staff, and provision is either by own employees of a department or outsourced to an NGO or commercial training organisation. The two main departments who have been supporting ABET programmes over the past ten years, are the Department of Labour (DoL) and the Department of Correctional Services (DCS). The DCS has been providing ABET programmes to between 3 000 and 11 000 offenders over the past seven years. In 1997, a total of 4 735 offenders were enrolled, and by 2002, the number had grown to 11 235 (DCS, 2003). Other departments, such as the South African National Defence Force and the Department of Agriculture (DoA), tended to have smaller numbers of learners. The DoE had established an interdepartmental committee where discussions of, and data about ABET were raised. By 2006, this structure no longer existed and the data is not available via the DoE's EMIS.

5 6This information was obtained from a presentation (which cited EMIS as the source) to an internal workshop of the Department of Education, entitled "A Preliminary Assessment of the Readiness of ABET to Absorb Kha Ri Gude Learners", 23 July 2008

126. Since the launch of the NSDS, provision via municipalities is on the increase. Local governments provide ABET in the majority of provinces. The SETAs, established in terms of the Skills Development Act, are likely to play an increasingly important role in training in government departments and in other workplaces.

127. ABET provision by Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)

128. NGOs have a long history of involvement in ABET provision and delivery.

129. However, the involvement of NGOs in ABET has shown a steady decline since 1997. Following the demise of the National Literacy Cooperation (NLC) programme and the World University Service (WUS) in 1998, the number of NGOs involved continued to decline to 35 in 1999 and 14 in 2000 (Aitchison et al., 2000; Baatjes, 2003). The main reason for this decline is the redirection of international donor funding from the NGO sector to Government and the gradual withdrawal by local private sector donors from the ABET sector. The formalisation and mainstreaming of ABET were also linked to an over-bureaucratisation of education, which presented numerous barriers to funding accessible to the NGO sector (Baatjes, 2003; Baatjes & Mathe, 2004).

130. During the same period, the ABET sector witnessed the emergence of commercial providers and the transformation of the majority of NGOs into private providers. As a result of legislation and policies of quality assurance, providers of ABET have been under significant pressure to conform to national compliance and accreditation procedures. Since the enactment of new regulatory frameworks, the larger NGOs have been able to reinvent themselves as service providers, mainly to business and industry, while NGO activities in communities have almost completely disappeared. In addition, a new group of "for-profit" or private providers has emerged with a greater focus on ABET provision in business and industry. The majority of the ABET providers, registered with Umalusi, are now concentrated in Gauteng (see Table 11). Although, even with the emergence of new private providers, the number of organisations working in ABET has shown a steep decline.

131. Of the Umalusi-registered ABET providers[6], Gauteng has more than three times as many centres in total than does any other province. There are also significantly more centres registered as private providers of ABET in Gauteng. Unfortunately, it was not possible to determine to what extent centres registered as "FET" providers or "schools" actually did provide ABET programmes or worked with adults at an ABET level.

132. It is important to note that the dominance of Gauteng in the available data might suggest an urban bias with the availability of urban infrastructure, or it might merely be confirmation of the migration trend, showing that Gauteng now has the largest population in the country, including those people who are poor and in need of education opportunities. The National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP) (2006), makes an important observation, namely that the majority of poor people are found in areas that demonstrate high economic potential – generally urban areas. This suggests a need for the targeting of interventions that is informed by a better understanding of where the target group is geographically located.

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6   Source: SAQA

133. For many years, the business and industry sectors have been key providers of ABET and have spent millions of Rand on ABET each year, before and since 1995 (Aitchison et al., 2000: 47). Information about the actual scale of ABET provision, including funding, has been vague, because of poor documentation and a lack of disclosure. Attempts to provide a clearer picture of ABET provision included two studies in the mining and manufacturing sectors, conducted in 2002. These studies indicated that ABET provision and delivery were mainly carried out by large corporations that had the necessary infrastructure and resources; that ABET was provided to relatively small groups of workers; that the content of ABET was limited to English literacy and numeracy skills; that ABET was regarded as a social programme rather than as an initiative integral to skills development; that only limited data on educational levels of workers had been collected; that training was rudimentary, unregulated and not rewarded; and that workers with a lower than Grade 9 education, were most vulnerable to retrenchment (Baatjes et al.; 2002c; Baatjes, 2002).

134. Since the development of skills legislation in 1998, and its implementation via the NSDS in 2000, ABET provision in companies has been brought back into focus. The NSDS has set as a target the improving of the educational levels of workers so that 70 percent of the workforce would have achieved a basic education (Grade 9) by the year 2005 (NSDS, 2000).

135. The DoL NSDS Report (DoL, 2001) indicates that an estimated 9,3 million workers were employed across the 25 economic sectors, of whom 5 619 161 had the equivalent of an NQF Level 1 qualification (Grade 9). A total of 904 993 workers without an NQF Level 1 had to be reached by the end of 2005, so as to meet the set target (DoL, 2003). This statistic represents 9,7 percent of all employed workers. It should be noted, however, that between 2003 and 2006, the rate of job creation accelerated, creating 1.4 million more jobs in the trade (626 000), construction (360 000), financial and business services (210 000) and manufacturing sectors (187 000)[7]. Judging by the sectors that created the highest number of jobs, the number of ABET candidates has also increased during this period.

136. The DoL data indicates that the number of workers participating in ABET have increased from 5 079 in 2001 to 899 686 by 2005. According to Table 12, approximately 10 313 519 education and training opportunities were provided between 2000 and 2005, with a further 833 369 between 2005 and 2008. It is important to note that these figures represent training opportunities and not necessarily a headcount of different individuals, as some people would have benefited from more than one of these opportunities. In addition, the ABET statistics are not broken down per ABET level, and it is therefore not clear how many learners completed a full qualification (NQF Level 1).

Table 11: Provision of Adult Education and Training funded by Skills Development Levies

Programme	Number of Learners reached by each programme	
	2000 – 2005	**2006 – 2008**
Learnerships & apprenticeships – employed learners	61 279	238 809
Learnerships – unemployed learners	109 647	142 031
Skills programmes – NSF & SETA sponsored	9 242 907	330 645
ABET	899 686	121 884

137. *Source: Information provided by the DoL as input for the Fifteen-year Review, undertaken by the Policy Coordination and Advisory Services in the Presidency.*

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7   Presentation on the performance of the South African Economy by Gerhard Kuhn, Senior Economist, Industrial Development Corporation, 15 March 2008.

138. Adult Education provision by Civil Society Organisations

139. A significant amount of adult education is conducted by civil society organisations. The forms of adult education are often beyond literacy and basic education levels, and include categories such as community development, community education, civic education, and trade union education. Community development and community education organisations may be involved in political education, human rights, social activism, religion-based education, agricultural work or land care. The primary focus of their work is therefore not classified as adult education, although they do a lot of educational work. Because much of their educational work is of a non-formal/informal nature, these organisations did not pursue or had decided against pursuing accreditation, thus avoiding the formalisation of programmes.

140. Many other NGOs/community-based organisations (CBOs) continue to provide important programmes, ranging from health education to political education.

141. A number of larger NGOs (not necessarily community-based), including Khanya College and IDASA, provide different kinds of programmes to adults, including winter school programmes and study circles.

142. Besides their other adult education programmes, many NGOs maintain close relations with social movements and community forums and provide programmes linked to community and social action.

143. Another category of adult education that is often not classified as such, involves programmes offered to people with disabilities, as well as programmes in the field of Early Childhood Development (ECD).

144. Although detailed information about NGO/CBO involvement in adult education is lacking, which is due largely to the way their work is defined, they are important organs that create space for learning and practices that contribute to the development of active and participatory citizenship and substantive democracy. The need to reflect and support the work of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in adult education policy formulation is important, because it has an important role to fulfil as an equalising force in South African society and in support of a culture of learning. In order for this to happen, a process of getting an accurate picture of NGO/CBO involvement in adult education needs to be put in place.

3.5 The Human Resources Framework

3.5.1 Intention of policy governing the employment of educators

145. Adult educators play an integral part in the delivery of quality learning opportunities. The object of policy is to ensure a stable adult education sector that provides learners with quality learning opportunities, while ensuring that adult educators are valued as key role-players. The recognition and continuous development of adult educators plays an integral part in creating a stable adult education system, as does the provision of supportive conditions of service.

146. The purpose of the Employment of Educators Act, No. 76 of 1998, is to make provision for the employment of educators by the State, for the regulation of conditions of service, for discipline, for the retirement and discharge of educators, as well as other related matters. The Act applies to all educators employed in public schools, further education and training institutions, departmental offices, and in adult basic education centres.

3.5.2 What currently prevails

147. In this section, the current conditions of service for adult educators working at PALCs are examined in relation to the qualifications that are recognised at these centres.

Conditions of Service

148. The Employment of Educators Act (1998) section 1(v) describes an educator as "any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental office or adult basic education centre and who is appointed in a post in any educator establishment in terms of this Act".

149. The impression created is that all educators in the education system are deemed to be of equal status and, based on their qualifications, they would mostly be treated the same. However, only a small percentage of ABET educators across the country enjoy full-time employment. The majority are employed in terms of one-year employment contracts that are renewable. Therefore, unlike most full-time school educators and educators at colleges, universities and universities of technology, the majority of adult educators do not enjoy the job security or benefits that are enjoyed by other educators. This does not make adult education an attractive career option.

150. With regard to the appointment of educators, the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) draft Collective Agreement of 2006 (ABET Educators Conditions of Service), regards ABET educators primarily as part-time employees. This draft agreement confirms that ABET provisioning is sadly not taken seriously by other education stakeholders, including trade union representatives who were party to this draft agreement.

151. Learners are not attracted into PALCs in great numbers, and significant numbers of learners do not complete the ABET courses at these centres. This impacts on the potential earning power of ABET educators, as provinces do their funding on the basis of a learner to educator ratio. The majority of educators work for just a few hours per evening, two or three evenings per week, but not more than 20 hours per week, as stipulated in the ELRC Agreement.

152. On paper, educators are employed at the current Personnel Administration Measures (PAM) rate, but reality shows a different picture. In an attempt to meet learner needs, especially at the higher ABET levels, ABET centre managers resort to reducing the hourly rate that educators are paid. For example, the prescribed hourly rate (R145.00 per hour) is not paid in most instances. Some educators earn as little as R50.00 per hour and centres use the difference in expenditure to compensate for more teaching time required and to purchase more Learning Support Materials (LSMs). In many instances educators are only paid for nine months of the year and do not receive any payment after the examinations, and they do not start earning before the centres are fully operational in the new year. By contrast, centre managers and site coordinators are paid by the PDEs for the full 12 months of the year. This has been known to cause tension between junior and senior staff members.

Qualifications

153. It is the role of the South African Council of Educators (SACE) to register educator qualifications acquired via the various education training and development institutions, universities and universities of technology. By law, educators, including adult educators, may not teach unless they are registered with SACE.

154. To qualify for employment, educators who work in ABET centres need to be qualified at Relative Education Qualification Values (REQVs) 11 to 15, with REQV 11 being a certificate in adult learning and REQV 15 a master's degree.

155. SACE registers educators with an M+3 teaching qualification or a 360 credit diploma in adult education. Educators having completed certificate courses below M+3 can obtain provisional accreditation if they can show proof of registration for a diploma course. However, many adult educators do not meet these requirements, although they may have obtained a certificate or an advanced certificate level qualification through UNISA or other Higher Education (HE) institutions.

156. There are nevertheless many educators, holding formal (school) teaching qualifications, who work in the ABET sector, and who completed certificate and diploma courses in adult education in addition to their mainstream teaching qualifications. However, the unstable and unfavourable employment conditions in the ABET sector are resulting in many of them returning to mainstream school teaching when the opportunity arises.

157. The Education Training and Development Practices (ETDP) ABET Certificate courses at NQF Level 5, carry 240 credits. It is anticipated that educators will find work in ABET centres after completing this course. Practitioner certificate and diploma courses are also available via the SETA at Level 6 and above.

3.6   The Qualifications and Curriculum Framework

3.6.1 Intention of Policy

158. The intention is to create a qualification system which:

- enables and supports the acquisition of a broad general education system for adults who have been denied access to education;
- enables and supports the acquisition of vocational skills for adults who need or want to acquire these skills;
- enables adults to obtain formal educational qualifications that have relevancy in society, should they need or want to, without meeting unnecessarily onerous requirements;
- enables adults to accumulate credits towards qualifications where they need or want to;
- does not restrict the design and offering of non-formal programmes and enables the development of vibrant non-credit bearing courses and programmes; and
- which does not unrealistically attempt to force formal and non-formal education into the same qualification system.

159. This needs to be supported by a curriculum system that:

- includes a national curriculum which, in a single succinct document for each subject, provides clear guidance for educators in terms of the content and skills to be acquired with regard to formal educational qualifications, and which provides clear guidance on other key aspects of the subject, such as sequencing, pacing and the required standards of assessment.

At the same time, this curriculum would:

- allow educators the freedom to select and use methodologies appropriate to the needs, interests and abilities of their learners; and

- combined with appropriate assessment instruments, would support educators in making decisions about where to place learners who enter the system; and would

- allow for assessment more frequently for formal educational qualifications, as opposed to an annual examination system; and, at the same time, would

- enable and support educators and organisations to develop diverse and responsive courses for non-credit bearing courses.

160. The Department of Education has the lead responsibility to provide well-designed courses, so as to enable adults to get a basic education, and to ensure good, flexible and available assessments to enable adults to obtain certificates. However, because any learner will be able to enrol for assessment, even if he or she has not been through the formal curriculum discussed above, skilled and dedicated educators will have the freedom to design their own curriculum, should they be confident that learners would achieve success via external assessments.

3.6.2 What currently prevails

161. The new NQF is an overarching framework, comprising ten levels encompassing three sub-frameworks, namely a General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework, a Trade and Occupational Qualifications Framework and a Higher Education Qualifications Framework. The three sub-frameworks encompass the work of three Qualifications and Quality Assurance Councils (QCs). Each QC will be responsible for the setting of standards and the quality assurance of qualifications, provisioning and learner achievement within their respective qualifications frameworks.

162. Two main types of qualifications were developed: the General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) which is certified by Umalusi and the industry related qualifications under the authority of Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs).

163. The General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) is achieved after completion of ABET Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4, which are equivalent to school Grades 3, 5, 7, and 9 respectively. It is a unit standards-based qualification, but the unit standards are organised according to eight learning areas. The requirement for eight learning areas was derived directly from the prescribed learning areas for the GETC in formal schooling. The GETC is obtained at PALCs and via private institutions under the auspices of the IEB.

164. There are 42 Level 1 qualifications registered on the NQF, which are not awarded by Umalusi, and these are supposed to form the basis for the provision of education under the auspices of the SETAs. These qualifications are spread unevenly across the 12 organising fields of learning adopted by SAQA. In some fields there are several qualifications and in others there are none whatsoever.

165. The qualifications contain exit level outcomes and associated assessment criteria, and more detail is specified in the constituent unit standards listed towards the end of the qualification description. Actual content to be covered is only to be defined in the form of outcomes and assessment criteria, and are open to interpretation. Content also differs in the degree to which it prepares learners for specific occupations, as some qualifications are far more restricted than others in this respect.

166. These qualifications are offered by private providers. It is assumed that they are offered in the main institutions certified by SETAs, but some of them may be certified by individual providers.

167. SAQA has a process underway to attempt to rationalise the number of qualifications available at Level 1 of the NQF.

168. There is no clear policy in the FET band with regard to qualifications for adults. This may present less of a problem in vocational education where programmes are actually aimed at more mature learners, but it seems to pose a problem with regard to general education, where the only qualification on offer is aimed at young learners.

169. For the majority of the many vocational and workplace-oriented qualifications that are available at Level 4, there is, however, no clear progression possibility into higher education.

170. Currently there are limited options in the system for an individual to acquire the National Senior Certificate (NQF level 4) outside the school system. The proposed new National Senior Certificate for Adults (NSCA) aims to initiate an alternative means for adults, including "second chance" adults and out-of-school youths, to obtain a qualification equivalent in value to the National Senior Certificate. This alternative route will allow the approximately half-a-million young adults, who annually do not get to write or pass the NSC, a viable second chance.

171. A steering committee was established to decide on subjects to be offered for the NSCA. The NSCA will be aimed at adult learners, i.e. persons who are older than 16 years and who are not attending public or independent schools, as well as at learners who are subject to other modes of education. This still needs to be thoroughly investigated and considered in full.

3.7 Governance Framework

3.7.1 Intention of Policy

172. Adult education policy aims to ensure quality and cooperative governance in AET, which is important for the realisation of government's aims and objectives in respect of adult education. The policy document on ABET (1997), recognised that ABET can only be delivered via partnerships and with the involvement of different stakeholders. Therefore, establishing properly constituted and functioning governance structures, which encourage democratic participation, are therefore essential.

173. This section of the report will be dealt with very briefly, as it seems inappropriate to dwell on issues of governance until the framework for the new adult education system has been finalised.

3.7.2 What currently prevails

National Advisory Board for ABET (NABABET)

174. Legislation provides for the establishment of a National Advisory Board for Adult Basic Education and Training (NABABET). The over-arching purpose of the Board will be to ensure that the provision of learning services for adults and out-of-school youths is regarded as a national effort to enable the sector to access greater financial and other resources.

175. With the establishment of the Board, greater numbers of potential and current learners could be addressed via the combined efforts of all sectors represented on the Board, and because of a more unified approach to the delivery of quality learning programmes.

176. The Board, as provided for in the Regulations for the establishment, composition and functioning of the NABABET was, however, never established.

177. Prior to the enactment of the ABET Act, an interim structure – the Interim ABET Advisory Board (IAAB) – was established to fulfil the functions of the envisaged Board. This structure functioned by means if four committees:

- the Practitioner Standing Committee
- the Curriculum Standing Committee
- the Advocacy Standing Committee
- the Assessment Task Team

178. A lot of development work was done via these committees. However, in view of the fact that the IAAB and its substructures were donor-funded, when the funds had been exhausted, all the structures had to cease operating.

Intergovernmental Committee

179. In addition to the IAAB – basically a stakeholder structure – another ad hoc structure was established, primarily consisting of national government departments that ran ABET programmes. This structure was mainly aimed at the sharing of information with other departments, at co-ordinating ABET delivery across departments, as well as ensuring policy synergy.

Provincial Governance Structures

180. The establishment of provincial governance structures is a prerogative of the Member of the Executive Council (MEC). A number of provinces established provincial stakeholder structures (Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Free State and Mpumalanga). These varied in terms of status, as some of the structures were formal and regulated, while others relied on guidelines that had no legal standing. The regulated or unregulated nature of these structures had implications for the relationship between the MEC and stakeholders and, in turn, for their functionality.

Institutional Governance

181. The democratisation of institutions was recognised as a strategic necessity in the transformation of education and the consolidation of democratic practice. The Act was written in a manner that required every public centre to establish a governing body. Sections 8 to11 of the Act indicate the composition, election and functions of the governing body.

182. The composition of the centre governing body poses a challenge, as it comprises elected members who are learners, educators, administrative staff members, as well as the centre manager. The members of the governing body are internal stakeholders in the centre. They are the only ones who can vote and be elected. The remainder of the centre governing members are voluntary members (sponsors and experts) or co-opted and therefore not elected.

4. PROPOSALS FOR POLICY DIRECTION

4. PROPOSALS FOR POLICY DIRECTION

4.1 The Policy and Legislative Environment

183. Specific policy proposals are elaborated upon in the sections that follow. In this section only the broad direction of the policy is highlighted:

184. Government has demonstrated the political will to implement policy and address the needs of adult learners by allocating sizeable resources to the Kha Ri Gude Campaign. To ensure positive, sustainable outcomes from this initiative, the same level of commitment and political will needs to be extended to the rest of the adult education sector. Furthermore, in order for policy to function well, intra-ministerial (within the DoE and DoL) and inter-ministerial (across ministries) collaboration is required on a sustained and structured basis.

185. The monitoring of quality, effectiveness and efficiency has been below standard. Structures and systems need to be in place to ensure monitoring takes place on a regular and sustainable basis.

186. Greater accountability from all levels of government is required for the proper functioning of the adult education and training sector.

187. Appropriate mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure that adult education is accorded the priority it deserves in the allocation of resources across the spheres of government while allowing for the necessary autonomy to respond to local needs.

188. There is a general lack of a culture of learning in South Africa. An ongoing national advocacy programme to create a culture of lifelong learning should be established and strategically located such that it can work across ministries and sectors.

189. There should be a single, yet differentiated adult education system, which is publicly funded, providing free learning opportunities for learners. In this new system, FET colleges will be designated as the primary, but not exclusive, institutional base for vocational education at all levels up to NQF 4; PALCs as primary institutional bases for general adult education at all levels up to NQF 4; and community centres as the primary institutional bases for non-formal education. To realise this policy goal might require the revision of mandates of the Departments of Education and Labour.

190. Legislation should be amended to ensure an improved response to policy proposals that require legislative changes.

191. Policy should aim to provide multiple and unlimited learning opportunities for adults of different ages and with diverse learning needs, to ensure realisation of the goals of equity and redress and, more importantly, to meet the pressing economic demands for diverse skills.

192. Provision should also be made in adult education for the needs of learners with disabilities.

193. All adult learning policies and programmes should be defined to encourage sustained participation and celebrate progressive achievement, rather than focusing on a once-off provision with a single outcome.

194. Research must underpin the constant evaluation of policies and implementation, so that the basis on which the systems are developed is sustainable and encourages engagement with the theories and practices that underpin adult learning.

4.2   Funding of Adult Learning

195.   In order to create stability in the adult education sector, the appropriate level of funding required for adult education needs to be investigated. Furthermore, an enforceable commitment should be undertaken by the provinces to move progressively towards that level of funding within a specified period of time. They also need to allocate funding at the same level and on a sustainable basis for some time to come. For example, in terms of the National Education Policy Act, the national Minister of Education could prescribe a minimum percentage of at least 3% of provincial education budgets to be allocated to AET programmes. International donors could fill any remaining gaps in the existing resources (e.g. by including adult literacy in the Fast Track Initiative).

196.   While the amounts allocated to AET by the PDEs are clearly inadequate, the total amount of funding going to education, training and skills development is substantial if one takes into account the funding that goes to the SETAs. In the light of high unit costs and the questionable quality of programmes, there is, however, growing evidence that, in many instances, the SETA funds are not being used optimally.

197.   Consideration must therefore be given to the issue of how resources, directed to the SETAs, or at the very least, a proportion of these resources, could be allocated to adult learning programmes, and what the most effective delivery mechanisms might be. SETAs and the NSF should also fund non-credit-bearing courses and non-unit standards-based courses.

198.   More efficient utilisation of current SETA funds would require greater cooperation between the Departments of Education and Labour, than has historically been the case. The division of education and training responsibilities between the two ministries has undoubtedly been a main source of the policy failures in service delivery, in the lack of equity and efficiency in education and training outcomes generally, and in adult learning in particular.

199.   Programme funding for the adult learning sector is addressed in the Department of Education's new "norms and standards", but it is of critical importance that mechanisms are in place to ensure adequate funding for adult learning programmes. Funding for adult learning should be ring-fenced to ensure that it is not redirected to other programmes. At least two possible alternative funding mechanisms could be considered.

200.   Firstly, there could be the creation of a conditional grant for adult learning programmes, emanating from the national Department of Education. The great advantage of this mechanism would be that it could ensure stipulated expenditure of the allocated amounts, as opposed to the allocation of such a grant being at the mercy of expedient decisions by provinces. However, a serious obstacle may exist in the reluctance of the National Treasury to create more conditional grants. Moreover, as a pre-condition, the creation of a conditional grant requires effective monitoring capabilities to be demonstrated by the centre.

201.   Secondly, resources could be transferred directly from the centre to providers, as is the case in the Brazilian example described below. Again, this would mean that the DoE would take responsibility for AET.

202.   Funding model used in Brazil[8]

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8   Henriques and Ireland (2007:6)

6.   Resources for developing the Literate Brazil Programme are transferred directly to institutions (in the case of public bodies) and by means of legal agreements (in the case of NGOs, higher education institutions and private companies), after teaching programmes have been approved and learners, literacy teachers and coordinators have been registered. The plan finances literacy courses lasting between six and eight months, providing US$49 for the training of each teacher (US$16 for initial training and US$32.50 for further training) and a further US$3 per student per month. This means that the pay of literacy teachers varies in relation to the size of the class. (Classes with 20 to 25 students, with different rules applying to classes where students have special needs, classes in prisons and classes in the countryside.) As a measure of comparison, the minimum wage in Brazil is US$122.

203.   It is necessary for government to adopt an unambiguous policy position, stating that formal accreditation of organisations with the SETAs, as well as formally registered qualifications is not a requirement for the offering of responsive adult education programmes. In fact, organisations should be funded in accordance with an evaluation of the quality and responsiveness of their work. This will enable international donors, companies that want to contract organisations to provide specific courses, as well as local donors to support responsive adult education programmes without fear of breaching government policy.

204.   Government must make it clear to international donors, companies wishing to contract organisations to provide specific courses, and to local donors, that formal accreditation of organisations with SETAs and formally registered qualifications are not a requirement for the offering of responsive adult education programmes, and that organisations should be funded based on an evaluation of the quality and responsiveness of their work.

4.3   The Institutional Landscape

205.   The funding of skills development by the SETAs appears to favour private providers and institutions above public institutions (e.g. FET colleges) and public service organisations when it comes to making provision for adult learning initiatives. This has negative consequences in terms of access to learning opportunities and the growth of the sector. It is recommended that an investigation be conducted to establish what is inhibiting support of these alternative institutions; and for the necessary changes to be effected.

206.   The use of other institutional bodies, including PALCs, FET colleges, higher education institutions, community colleges, colleges of education, community halls, tribal courts, Thusong Centres, public libraries and workplaces must be encouraged and supported.

207.   In addition, schools, FET colleges and higher education institutions, as venues for the delivery of adult learning programmes, need to become more "adult learner-friendly". It is proposed that the establishment of an "arms-length" parastatal type of agency, similar to FET provision in the United Kingdom, be investigated for South Africa. This agency could be appointed in a coordinating role and as part of a life-long learning advocacy initiative, to work alongside other structures in order to develop adult learner-friendly institutions and promote a culture of life-long learning.

208.   Policy should be aimed at providing multiple and unlimited learning opportunities for adults of different ages, and with diverse learning needs, to ensure the realisation of the goals of equity and redress.

209.   Different modes of provision, including greater use of information communication technology in adult education, should be investigated and encouraged.

4.4   Human Resources Framework

210.   Once the funding situation has been stabilised, it would be possible to offer adult educators long-term employment contracts or permanent employment. Conditions of service for adult educators should include improved salaries, similar to those of teachers with comparable qualifications.

211.   National policy on the training and continuous development of adult educators, with a view to providing a coherent qualifications framework, should be developed.

212.   The Department of Education should provide bursaries for the training of adult educators.

213.   Adult educators, who have been working in adult education without the requisite qualifications prior to the new policy coming into effect, should be employed and remunerated at the entry level (REQV11) for a period of 10 years. During this time they will be expected to improve their qualifications in order to meet the stipulated employment requirements.

214.   The experience of adult educators should be recognised and assessed via RPL systems, in order to attain requisite qualifications and for accessing further formal education opportunities.

215.   An expanded AET system will require significantly more resources to fund programmes, as well as for the establishment of posts. At the very least, adult education in the system must be established at a chief directorate level with several directorates responsible for a combination of areas such as curriculum, teacher development, research, monitoring and evaluation, information systems, assessment, and governance among others.

4.5   Curriculum and Qualifications Framework

216.   A general principle is that a new approach to the qualifications and curricula for adults must ensure the provision of high quality general education for adults on the one hand, with the Department of Education as one of the key providers of this education while, on the other hand, it must provide an environment that encourages and supports a wide range of non-formal education programmes.

217.   A new, simplified, NQF Level 1 general adult education qualification should be designed so as to contain only four compulsory subjects, namely a language, Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences.

218.   A new, simplified, NQF Level 4 general adult education qualification should be designed so as to also contain only four compulsory subjects, namely a language, Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences.

219.   High quality, clear, succinct, national curricula for these courses should be designed and produced by the Department of Education, containing clear guidelines in terms of content, sequencing, pacing and assessment standards.

220.   A flexible assessment system should be designed for both Levels 1 and 4 qualifications, allowing assessment at regular intervals throughout the year, so as to demonstrate attainment of the knowledge and skills specified in the national curricula. Guidance and counselling would be essential during these processes.

221.   Enrolment for assessment should not be linked only to enrolment in courses. Therefore, organisations wishing to enrol learners for the assessment after teaching their own courses, should be allowed to do so and learners should also be able to enrol themselves, as individuals, for assessment at any time.

222.   There is a lack of support for, and guidance of adult learners. Both of these should be offered in a structured way and should be facilitated by, inter alia, "assessment centres", and via an enhanced culture of lifelong learning in the workplace and in communities.

223. The Department of Education must ensure the compilation and distribution of good textbooks to public adult learning centres and community colleges, and also make them readily available to other organisations.

224. There needs to be a shift from the current format of ABET, as the only form of adult education, to other forms of learning that are more suitable and attractive to adults. Non-formal adult learning should encompass a range of programmes for which norms and standards should be developed.

225. In terms of the provision of non-formal, needs-based, responsive courses and programmes, educators and organisations should be free to develop their own curricula.

226. Literacy has a bearing on the acquisition and use of reading, writing and numeracy skills, and thereby the development of active citizenship, improved health and livelihoods, and gender equality. The goals of literacy programmes should reflect this understanding

227. Literacy should be seen as a continuous process that requires sustained learning and application – i.e. embedded within a framework of lifelong learning – and not as isolated programmes with no opportunities for progress or articulation. The present piecemeal approach is not ideal.

228. More flexible and responsive models of learning, based on local conditions, will require appropriately skilled educators, who can work from the point where the learners find themselves at. This will require a reconsideration of what constitutes the relevant skills of a "new adult educator". These include the need for less focus on outputs and more emphasis on creativity. Also, debates on the nature of work and the new work order in the context of globalisation, need to be considered in the current conceptualisation and implementation of training for educators, qualifications, curriculum development, learning programme design and broad education practice. South Africa needs to consider international approaches that have worked in other developing countries, and in contexts and under conditions that are similar to those in South Africa – especially in poor and marginalised communities.

4.6   New Governance Framework for Adult Learning

229. While substantial input has been received in respect of the governance of adult learning, it is felt that this should only be given detailed consideration once a framework for adult learning has been agreed upon.

230. Monitoring and evaluation within the sector, guided by reliable data, is recommended. Research surveys should be conducted bi-annually, across the different areas of adult learning, and data should be aggregated both nationally and provincially, so as to establish adult participation in lifelong learning. This could be driven by SAQA, in conjunction with the QCs, or mandated/tendered to an external agency.

231. Improved accountability is also regarded as a necessity. Different modes and sites of delivery will require different governance structures.

232. The establishment of effective governance mechanisms is necessary in order to contribute towards a conducive learning environment, the sound management of institutions, and improved accountability. Governance in AET needs to respond to the multi-faceted and diverse nature of the sector, because uniform and single governance models in AET do not work. The challenge pertaining to AET is to establish robust governance arrangements that are responsive to their context, and are themselves contextualised with regard their to establishment, functions, composition and membership.

5. THE WAY FORWARD

5.   THE WAY FORWARD

233.   The views expressed in this report have not benefited from input from the general public, educators, experts and other adult education stakeholders. It is proposed that three two-pronged consultation processes be initiated, namely:

- Targeted consultation with government departments and, in particular, the provincial Departments of Education and Labour.
- Consultative workshops with the community of experts, such as universities, the research community, NGOs, unions and other representative bodies.
- Publishing the discussion document for pubic comment – allowing sufficient time for comments rather than the minimum 30-day period.

234.   A policy development process, taking into account inputs from the consultative process as discussed above, should follow. This should be accompanied by a thorough assessment of the viability of the policy proposals, including an assessment of the resource implications of the policy proposals.

235.   A detailed planning process, which identifies the time intensity of each proposal and proposing a sequencing of implementation, based on whether the policy could be implemented immediately (within 18 months), in the medium term (18 to 36 months) or in the long term (36 months and more).

236.   One of the most important initial steps is a national survey of adult education to determine the extent of the need for learning opportunities, the availability of infrastructure and educators, the capacity to train educators, as well as an audit of the functions of PALC governing bodies.

237.   An interim structure, which is adequately funded and provided with the necessary resources, should be established urgently, to oversee the next stages of this process. This process should, in particular, take into account the various policy initiatives currently underway that have serious implications for adult education (such as the development of the NSCA, the implementation of policy emanating from the NQF Review, the review of qualifications by SAQA, and the Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign, amongst others).

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APPENDIX A

IEB CASE STUDY – A YEAR OF PARTICIPATION

238.   Between April 2007 and March 2008, the IEB offered ABET Level 1 to 4 learners the opportunity to write examinations. Data on the learners who participated in the examination sessions during this period were provided to the committee and is presented here as a contribution to developing an understanding of the people who have participated in ABET programmes.   The period stipulated included two national examination sessions, which were held in June and November 2007, as well as seven "on request" sessions. Due to the way the IEB organises its data, the tables are based on the number of examinations that learners registered to write (47 579)[9] rather than the number of learners who registered to write (26 968) during this period. Table 4 sheds some light on the most popular time for adult learners to write examinations.

Table 12: Spread of participation in examination sessions: April 2007 – June 2008

	Examination Description	Number registered
1	Exams on Request: April 2007	1 698
2	National Exams: June 2007	4 924
3	Exams on Request: July 2007	1 880
4	Exams on Request: August 2007	3 870
5	Exams on Request: September 2007	1 651
6	National Exams: November 2007	11 617
7	Exams on Request: December 2007	11 750
8	Exams on Request: February 2008	2 812
9	Exams on Request: March 2008	3 347
10	Exams on Request: April 2008	1 412
11	National Examinations: June 2008	2 588
	Total	47 491

239.   Table 12 indicates that the most popular time to write during the period April 2007 to June 2008, was December 2007, followed by the national examination session in November 2007. This could indicate that learners missed the registration date for the November examination or required some extra time to prepare for the examinations. However, upon reading this analysis of the data, the CEO of the IEB commented that December 2007 was the date by which learners, who were funded by a tender from the Department of Labour, had to write[10]. Table 5 analyses the gender and race composition of the learners who participated in the examinations.

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9   The original data listed 52 311 registrations, but included 4 732 duplicate NQF Level 1 registrations, as well as data on people who had registered for an examination that still had to be written.

10   Communication via E-mail: Ann Oberholzer, IEB CEO, 18 June 2008.

Table 13: Analysis of gender and race of participants in examination sessions: April 2007 – June 2008

| Female | | | | | | Female | Male | | | | | | Male | Total |
A	B	C	I	W	U	Total	A	B	C	I	W	U	Total	
557	20 882	1 319	59	306	25	23 148	524	22 651	887	60	264	10	24 396	47 544

240.   Table 13 indicates that slightly more males (51%) participated than females, and that the only significant racial group who participated was classified as "Black". This rate reflects the historical imbalance caused by apartheid, rather than the racial breakdown of the country, as indicated in Table 14.

Table 14: Comparison of ABET participation and SA Census 2001

	Black African	Coloured	White	Asian and Indian
SA Census 2001	79%	8.9%	9.6%	2.5%
IEB participation	92%	4.6%	1.2%	2.5%

241.   Table 15 begins to address the spatial distribution of learners, using the rural/urban split that was used in the IEB data set. It starts to include the difference across the four ABET levels in the analysis. The Table indicates that there were higher levels of participation in Levels 1 and 2 than in Levels 3 and 4 (NQF 1). The ratio of participation remained fairly constant between rural and urban participants across the four levels and averaged 13% rural, compared to 87% urban. These differing participation rates between urban and rural-based learners may be interpreted in different ways. It could mean that there are limited learning opportunities and more barriers to learning in rural areas, compared to urban areas; or that there are different motivations for learning between learners in these two sectors. Importantly, it could also indicate a trend, observed in recent years, of the migration of people, including those with low education levels, from rural to urban areas in search of opportunities.

Table 15: Comparison of urban/rural participants in examination sessions: April 2007 – June 2008

Geographical Description	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	NQF 1	Total
Rural total	1 920	1 801	1 301	1 371	6 393
Urban total	11 202	1 2138	9 535	8 311	41 186
Grand total	13 122	13 939	10 836	9 682	47 579

242.   Table 16 indicates the same pattern for male and female participation across the urban/rural divide. Overall, ABET Level 2 attracted the highest number of registrations, with the largest grouping being "urban male". It is significant to note the discrepancy in participation at this level between urban men (6 608) and rural women (693). The highest level of participation for rural women was ABET Level 1, but it was still a very small figure of only 908 registrations. When comparing male and female groups, the only group in which there were more female registrations was at NQF 1, and it was for the "urban female group".

Table 16: Comparison between gender & urban/rural participants in examination sessions: April 07 – June 08

Geographical Description		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	NQF 1	Total
Female	Rural total	908	693	540	874	3 015
	Urban total	5 402	5 528	4430	4 773	20 133
	Female total	6 310	6 221	4970	5 647	23 148
Male	Rural total	1 000	1 100	761	487	3 348
	Urban total	5 798	6 608	5104	3 538	21 048
	Male total	6 798	7 708	5865	4 025	24 396
Unknown						30
Grand Total		13 122	13 939	10 836	9 682	95 118

243. Given the data provided by the IEB, it was not possible to identify the location of participants or the centres at which they were registered beyond this broad rural/ urban classification. However, it is possible to state that:

- participants came from 1 480 different centres;

- 50% (744) of these centres had registered less than 15 examinations during the period;

- 60 centres registered only one learner each during the period; and

- that there were 88 centres which registered for more than 100 examinations.

244. The data obtained on the centres was not specific about identifying the sector in which they were located, but it was possible to identify that the largest group of 33 centres, which were responsible for 5081 examination registrations, were DoL/Prolit centres. There were also significant registration numbers from eight centres located at mines (1 802 registrations), as well as from two full-time institutions located in the Free State (2 617 registrations).

245. Table 17 provides an analysis of the age range of the participating learners. The analysis was calculated from the date of birth obtained from the data, and the age of the learners in April 2008. It indicates that 28.5% of participating learners were between the ages of 41 and 50, across all four ABET levels, but there were significant numbers of learners participating who were between the ages of 21 and 55.

246. So, how well are the participants doing? The above tables include data on the participants who registered for examination sessions of April and June 2008. However, when this Green Paper was compiled, the results of these two examinations were still being processed and are therefore excluded from further analysis. There were 1 428 participants in April 2008, and 2 588 registered for June 2008. Excluding these two groups, leaves one with a sample size of 43 563.

Table17: Age range for learners in examination sessions: April 2007 – June 2008

Age Range	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	NQF 1	Total	% of Total
16 – 20yrs	295	215	364	475	1 349	2.8%
21 - 25 yrs	855	969	1 133	1 581	4 538	9.5%
26 - 30 yrs	1 143	1 551	1 314	1 420	5 428	11.4%
31 - 35 yrs	1 192	1 657	1 209	1 239	5 297	11.1%
36 - 40 yrs	1 427	1 923	1 445	1 152	5 947	12.5%
41 - 45 yrs	1 812	2 310	1 587	1 191	6 900	14.5%
46 - 50 yrs	1 968	2 128	1 520	1 022	6 638	14.0%
51 - 55 yrs	1 652	1 372	939	604	4 567	9.6%
56 - 60 yrs	1 018	671	410	294	2 393	5.0%
61 - 65 yrs	271	193	98	56	618	1.3%
> 65 yrs	120	59	33	10	222	0.5%
Unknown	1 369	891	784	638	3 682	7.7%
Total	13 122	13 939	10 836	9682	47 579	100.0%

247. Tables 18 and 19 shed some light on the results of the learners, and use the following code: ABS: absent; U: Ungraded; T: Threshold (close to a pass); C: Commended; HC: Highly Commended; and M: Merit. The actual criteria for attainment vary for the different levels, with NQF Level 1 requiring lower levels of attainment than the other three levels.

Table 18: Analysis of results of examination sessions by number [11]: April 2007 – March 2008

Level	ABS	U	T	C	HC	M	Total
Level 1	1 987	2 857	933	3 061	1 365	1 415	11 618
Level 2	1 631	3 450	1 381	3 591	1 349	1 091	12 493
Level 3	1 768	2 672	1 062	3 018	867	383	9 770
NQF 1	1 912	4 476	514	1 958	779	43	9 682
Total	7 298	13 455	3 890	11 628	4 360	2 932	43 563

248. To facilitate the reading of these numbers, Table 19 converts the numbers into percentages. The results indicate that 16.8% of learners across the four levels did not arrive to write the examination for which they had registered. An average of a further 30.9% achieved such a low score that it could not be graded, and was therefore merely recorded as "U". The percentage of NQF Level 1 learners attaining a rating of "U" is particularly high at 46%. In contrast, the number of learners attaining an "M" at NQF Level 1, is particularly low at 0.4%.

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11   The results in these tables reflect the number of registrations for examinations (43 563) and not the number of individuals (26 968).

Table 19: Analysis of results of examination sessions by percentage: April 2007 – March 2008

Level	ABS	U	T	C	HC	M	Total
Level 1	17.1%	24.6%	8.0%	26.3%	11.7%	12.2%	100.0%
Level 2	13.1%	27.6%	11.1%	28.7%	10.8%	8.7%	100.0%
Level 3	18.1%	27.3%	10.9%	30.9%	8.9%	3.9%	100.0%
NQF 1	19.7%	46.2%	5.3%	20.2%	8.0%	0.4%	100.0%
Total	16.8%	30.9%	8.9%	26.7%	10.0%	6.7%	100.0%

249.   Table 20 divides the results into "successful" and "not successful", using the IEB guideline of who would obtain a certificate. Only those learners who write the examinations and achieve a "C", an "HC" or an "M", obtain a certificate and are graded in Table 20 as "successful".

Table 20: Analysis of results of examination sessions according to "successful"/"not successful":

April 07 – March 08

| Criteria	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		NQF 1		Ave for all
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	levels
Not successful	5 777	49.7%	6 462	51.7%	5 502	56.3%	6 902	71.3%	57.3%
Successful	5 841	50.3%	6 031	48.3%	4 268	43.7%	2 780	28.7%	42.7%
Total	11 618	100.0%	12 493	100.0%	9 770	100.0%	9 682	100.0%	100.0%

250.   The results of this analysis indicate that only 43% of learners across the four levels, who registered to write examinations, actually attained a certificate of competence. Table 20 also indicates that fewer learners are successful as the level of difficulty increases.

251.   How does one determine the popular subjects with the most participants? Table 21 lists the range of subjects for which learners registered during the period of analysis. It indicates that learners only participated in significant numbers in "Communication in English" and one of two numeracy/mathematical subjects. Of particular concern is the low level of participation (2 757 registrations) in communication subjects other than English language. Across the four ABET levels there is, on average, a 6% participation in other subjects.

Table 21: Analysis of examination sessions by subject entered: April 2007 – June 2008

Subject Description	Total
Communication in English	22 677
Numeracy in English	10 777
Mathematical Literacy	7 352
Communication in isiZulu	380
Communication in isiXhosa	378
Communication in Setswana	53
Communication in Sepedi	16
Communication in Afrikaans	33
Communication in Sesotho	10
Numeracy in isiZulu	37
Mining	723
Natural Sciences	53
Human & Social Sciences	87
Life Orientation	174
Economic & Management Sciences	90
Grand Total	42 840

252. Is it possible to determine the participants' performance in the "popular subjects"? The following four charts present a picture of how well participants, who registered to write an English or numeracy/mathematical literacy examination, performed.

Chart 2: Comparison of English and Mathematics results: ABET Levels 1 to 3 and NQF

Legend:		Numeracy/ Mathematical Literacy		Communication in English
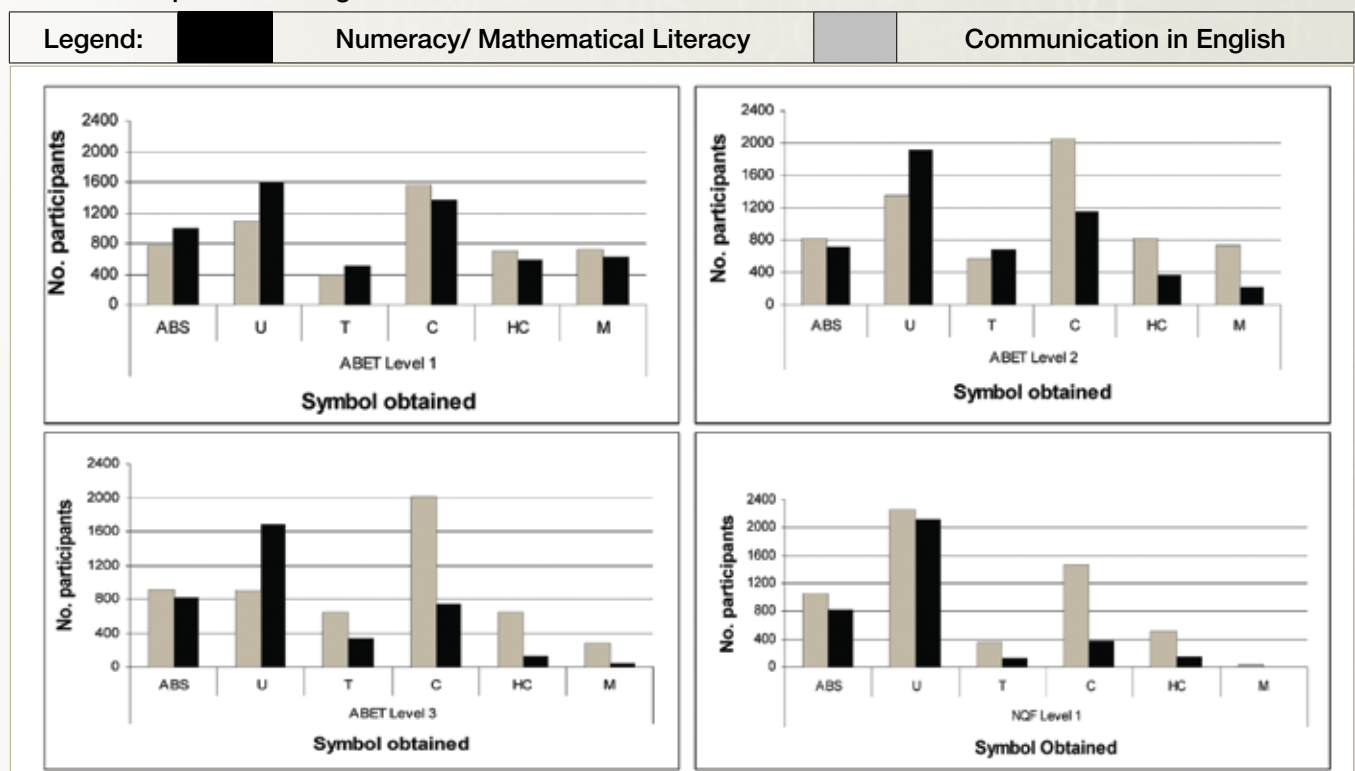
253. The charts indicate that at ABET Level 1, the results for Communication in English and for Numeracy are fairly similar across the two subjects, but at the other levels the results for English are better. This can be observed by looking at the last three columns in each chart, namely; Commended (C), Highly Commended (HC) and Merit (M). It is only these participants who would have obtained a certificate of competence.

254. As with the previous tables, the first three columns represent participants who did not write (ABS), or who obtained a score too low to rate (U), or a threshold score (T), and who could be assessed as "unsuccessful".

255. Table 22 provides a synopsis of the "successful" participants at ABET Levels 1 to 3 for the two subject areas under discussion. The table indicates that:

- Slightly more than half of the people who registered to write the Communication in English examination for ABET Levels 1 to 3 during this period, were successful – i.e. they obtained a certificate.

- Just over one third of the people who registered to write the Communication in English examination at NQF Level 1, were successful.

- Far fewer people were successful at all four levels in the Numeracy/Mathematical Literacy examinations.

Table 22: Successful participants by % for examination sessions in two subjects and at four levels:

April 2007 – March 2008

Subject	ABET Level 1	ABET Level 2	ABET Level 3	NQF Level 1
Communication in English	56.9%	56.9%	54.4%	35.6%
Numeracy/Mathematical Literacy	54.5%	34.3%	24.3%	14.9%

256. Summary of analysis of IEB data for 2007/2008

On average there was a ratio of 13% rural to 87% urban participants.

The overall participation rate was slightly higher for men (51%) than for women (49%).

ABET Level 2 had the highest number of registrations and these were mostly urban and mostly classified as "urban male".

Although the largest group of participants was between the ages 41 and 50 (28.5%), there were a significant number of learners participating in the entire range between the ages of 21 and 55.

A total of 24% of learners across the four levels did not write the examinations for which they had registered.

A further 28% achieved such a low score that they could not be graded, and their results were recorded as "U".

A total of 39% of learners across the four levels, who registered to write, actually attained a certificate of competence.

Fewer learners were successful as the level of difficulty increased.

The subjects English and Numeracy/Mathematical Literacy accounted for 94% of registrations.

The pass rate ranges across the four levels from 36% to 51% for English and from 15% to 41% for Numeracy/Mathematical Literacy.

Notes