

Imagining Community and Education Training Centres

A Report on Consultation with Communities in Three Provinces

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Acronyms

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ANCWL	African National Congress Women's League
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CET	Community Education and Training
CETC	Community Education and Training Centre
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
FET	Further Education and Training
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NSF	National Skills Fund
PALC	Public Adult Learning Centre
PSET	Post-school Education and Training
SEET	Skills, Employment, Education and Training
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority

1. Introduction

The Departmental Task Team was established to conceptualise models of Community Education and Training Centres (CETCs) that replace the current Public Adult Learning Centre (PALC) system in South Africa. The Task Team undertook research in communities in three provinces, that is, Freedom Park in Gauteng, Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal and Sekhukhune in Limpopo. The research was undertaken in these selected communities and with institutions and organisations that provide educational programmes for adults and out-of-school youth, both unemployed and employed. Some of the organisations (community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)) and institutions are not based within these three communities, but have relationships with them through their educational programmes.

This report provides an overview of the responses of various groups, representatives of institutions, NGOs and CBOs, as well as PALC Managers. The research was undertaken during the months of February and March. In the case of Limpopo, Sekhukhune was visited. Data collection took place in the Elias Motsoaledi Municipality located 12km north of Groblersdal, which includes the Motetema Educational Circuit. The research was conducted in three villages that form part of the Motetema Educational Circuit, namely Motetema, Ga-Mumphudi and Ga-Matsepe.

In Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, data collection took place at two main sites. Tembaletu Trust was the site used for interviews with various groups, namely (1) CBOs and NGOs located at Tembaletu, (2) other CBOs and NGOs who have long histories working in community education, (3) rural and urban youth and adults, and (4) adult learners from the Msunduzi Municipality enrolled in Tembaletu's ABET programme. The second site was the University of KwaZulu-Natal and interviews were held with students enrolled in three academic programmes.

In Gauteng data collection took place with community members of Freedom Park in Johannesburg, Johannesburg-based CBOs and NGOs who work across semi-urban areas, and PALC Managers.

The report presents the research findings. This report is divided into seven sections. Following the introduction, the conceptual framework is provided. It includes a brief summary of key concepts such as community, community education, community education models, the relationship between community education and community development, and community participation. In the third section a brief description of the data collection is provided. This is followed by a discussion of the findings. The first part of the findings focuses on understanding the nature of community needs, while the second part is about imagining CETCs and focuses on assessing how CETCs should address these needs. This is followed by a conclusion that summarises the key findings of the research project. In the final section of the report a framework for CETCs is proposed and some of the implications are raised for consideration and discussion.

2. Conceptual framework

Community education is gaining increasing attention in a number of countries (Reid, Gill & Sears, 2010; Tett, 2010; Rogers, 2010; Beck & Purcell, 2010; Veltmeyer & O'Malley, 2001; Longo, 2007; Schutz, 2010; Schutz & Sandy, 2011). This comes at a time when demands for social and economic reforms are on the increase. At the same time, there has been an increase in research on community mobilisation and community organising as well as learning in social movements, with specific focus on the role of youth and adults (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Ginwright, Noguera & Cammarota, 2006; Kgobe, Baatjes & Sotuku, 2012; Motala, 2011; Baatjes & Vally, 2012 (forthcoming); Baatjes & Baatjes, 2012 (forthcoming); Warren & Mapp, 2011). Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) and Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR) are becoming important educational mechanisms through which community issues and problems are being understood and addressed.

As part of the conceptualisation of CETCs it is important to consider some theoretical concepts that could assist in framing CETCs as alternatives to PALCs. A carefully considered conceptualisation of community education could serve as an important way of examining and shaping the assumptions behind government policies and the ensuing practice developments. Such examination is of particular importance if the intention of government policy is concerned with making a real difference to the lives of the urban and rural poor. Current policy discourse on post-school education and training (PSET) in South Africa suggests that community education should support learning and development that leads to social justice for everyone through the development of imaginative and progressive solutions to seemingly intractable difficulties. The Green Paper of PSET, for example, makes clear reference to the role of education in addressing inequality and poverty. Therefore, the selection of a conceptual framework that centers inequality (in relation to unemployment and poverty) as a key problem in South African society could play an important role in the way we define and position community education.

2.1 The meaning of community

The term 'community' has different meanings. It remains a complex concept but is an idea that is important because it describes something essential and irreducible about the everyday reality of peoples' lives and the spaces where those lives are lived (Tett, 2010: 13). Giving careful consideration to the meaning of community is important to those who engage in community work, how they define community and the relationships within communities because these definitions have significant implications for action. For the purpose of this summary, we divide the meaning of community into three main areas as set out by Tett (2010): Firstly, as place of locality – a social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage. This is the most frequently used meaning and refers to people who have in common that they live in a particular geographical community such as a neighbourhood or village. Secondly, community as interest – a social, religious, occupational, or other group sharing common characteristics or interests and perceived or perceiving itself as distinct in some respect from the larger society within [which](#) it

exists (usually preceded by ‘the’): the business community; the community of scholars. This refers to people who are linked together by factors such as religious belief, sexual orientation or ethnic origin and so they share a common characteristic such as their membership of the Christian, Gay or Chinese communities. Thirdly, community as function – This refers to groups with the same profession, such as teachers, or the same role, such as community representatives, or those who have common interests such as football, which leads them to acquire a common sense of identity through the actions that they engage in together (Tett, 2010: 11).

For the purposes of establishing a CETC, it would make most sense to use the first definition as described above. While members of a ‘community’ are located within a particular physical space, it is important to note that the ‘social group’ is not homogeneous. Communities are often heterogeneous and multifaceted and do not easily fit the predetermined descriptions or the values and other spiritual, territorial, economic, or ‘national’ attributes by which communities might be defined. Obviously there will be certain things shared by the group specifically with regard to where they reside, but the group will be comprised of men and women, young and old, of differing values and beliefs. Therefore, a ‘community group’ should not be viewed as the ‘same’, even though community members will, in all likelihood, share certain commonalities. For the purposes of conceptualising community education, we suggest that ‘community’ be understood as a geographically-based human relationship between a number of people who may or may not know each other, share a sense of purpose and values, interact in their work and family and share power to shape their lives. It is therefore constituted by a collection of individuals who are linked through significant connections – history, sets of values, a sense of belonging. These connections are of critical importance to community education and actions because they provide the relationships through which people work in community institutions such as schools, libraries, places of worship and so forth (Kgobe, Baatjes & Sotuku, 2012). We do, however, need to highlight that there are several historically significant and definable qualities which provide strong markers of communities in which CETCs need to support social change. These include the historical dispossession and ‘resettlement’ of people, their specific geographical locations, the effects of racist policies on their health and basic rights, their deliberate and planned political exclusion, the oppressive forms of control over mobility, the lack of opportunities for personal and social advancement and the numbing effects of economic deprivation and poverty (Kgobe, Baatjes & Sotuku, 2012).

2.2 Community education

According to Tett (2010) the primary purpose of community education is “education *within* and *for* communities”. Tett sees community education as responding to people’s own concerns; and works to create a shared, active and political space where wider solidarities that encompass a multiplicity of perspectives can be developed. (See Appendix A: Proshika: A Community Literacy Programme as an example). Community education is also seen as “embracing the formal as well as the non-formal systems, seeking to mobilise all forms of education, especially the primary and secondary schools, into the service of the whole

community” (Rogers, 1992). This involves a blurring of traditional boundaries and an emphasis on education that grows out of people’s experiences and the social interests that are generated within communities. Others (Choudry & Kapoor, 2010) refer to this as “learning from the ground up” where the richness of knowledge production within communities emerges as a means of addressing community problems and issues. Community education usually has a different focus from mainstream education both in its curricula and in its methods. Community education is about encouraging and engaging people throughout life into learning that is based on what they are interested in, and that emerges in relation to problems and issues experienced on a daily basis. Education is developed that is relevant to the participating learners and is responsive to community priorities identified *with* people rather than *for* them. The motivation or generative themes (Freire) and purpose for learning by the participants will change over time, but if education is rooted in communities “it will allow genuinely alternative and democratic agendas to emerge at the local level” (Martin cited in Tett, 2010: 1).

This idea that community education is ‘organic’ and that ideas, needs and wants come from the members of the community, rather than being imposed by outside people (even if they are ‘experts’), is very important. There are many examples of failed top-down approaches to community education in which so-called ‘experts’ imposed their ideas on communities. These largely fail because the experts ignore what community members already know and can do and what they need and/or want. They view community members as being, like the well-known expression, a ‘half empty glass’ as opposed to one that is ‘half full’. The experts think they know better (also known as asset-based approach, social pathology or the deficit model of education).

Community development is sometimes driven by ‘deficit’ perspectives on impoverished communities. It can treat impoverished communities as if they are largely made up of problems (often problem *people*) that need to be ‘fixed’ by outside agencies. Efforts like these are often led by outside organisations and/or professionals with few, if any, long-term connections to the communities they are trying to assist (Schutz & Sandy, 2011: 38). Pertinent examples are Arundhati Roy’s case study into the failure of large-scale dam and irrigation projects in India (The Cost of Living, 1999) and Sainath’s research (Everybody Loves a Good Drought, 1999) on the failure both in local practice, and also in policy and systems approach to change. Simply put, top-down and external expert-led development have proven unsuccessful in many contexts (Beck & Purcell, 2010: 95). Beck and Purcell in their research with youth and community workers point out the need for awareness amongst outsiders who impose their “cultural values into the communities [they] work with” and assume that it is inevitable. If this is done without careful reflection or criticism it may well lead to the unwitting imposition of one’s culture over another, which will disempower the very people whom the actions intend to empower (2010: 29).

Beck and Purcell further suggest useful principals about education, knowledge production and learning. They highlight “traditional non-Western forms of knowledge” which include:

- a) Learning is communal. One's identity is not as an individual as in the West, but is based on the notion of collective identity. In this context the purpose of learning is not for personal but for improving the well-being of the community through the sharing of knowledge and collective and reciprocal activity.
- b) Lifelong learning is understood as an informal process that is embedded in everyday experience and necessary to enable the individual learner to improve their contribution to society. Much important informal learning is created through problem-solving activities based around daily life.
- c) Learning is holistic. It is not fragmented as in the West, but an integrated process that takes place through the mind, the body, emotions and the spirit. Learning is rooted in the experience of daily life and through participating in rituals and collective experiences.

Community education, just like other forms of education, is driven by different ideological and philosophical traditions. The instrumentalist and emancipatory traditions of education have been described as competing traditions by many scholars (Freire, 1970; Rogers, 1992; Jarvis, 1993; Foley, 2000). These two traditions continue today, albeit with some blurring (Baatjes, 2008; Baatjes & Mathe, 2004). However, most education is about teaching children or adults 'to fit in'; to conform; and not to question the way things are. It is about serving the interests of those in power. In recent years, education driven by the instrumentalist logic or human capital theory has received much criticism. Of relevance here is how inadequate skills levels amongst adults and youth are viewed as the causes of poverty and inequality, and that learning and skills development are the solution. The logic here is that skills, education and training that are modernised and made more responsive to the needs of employers are required to make the economy work. However, the relationship between education and training and economic development is complex and there is little evidence that participating in skills development, education and training will necessarily translate into greater prosperity for all. (Marsh, 2010; Tett, 2010; Brown, Lauder & Ashton, 2010). Both studies and analyses by Marsh and Brown et al suggest that the arguments about the relationship between skills, education and training and poverty reduction and inequality are a fallacy.

Freire and others (Allman, 2002; Magison-Hyslop & Sears, 2010) oppose instrumentalist education which Freire called "education for domestication". He believed that education should be about getting people to understand their situation more fully and why things are the way they are; and to think deeply about and question; and finally to act in order to change what is wrong and unjust. Freire believed in "education for liberation". Work and education in communities can be about much more than people simply doing basic tasks. It should be about reflecting on what is happening in one's community and responding to what is happening with the hope of affecting some sort of change for the better, even if it is in a small way. Often the focus is on changing some aspect of the individual, as opposed to changing the context in which she or he finds themselves. Freire's problem-posing methods can assist with questioning and changing the context. The emancipatory tradition has been adopted by many community education programmes in different parts of the world (Crowther, Hamilton & Tett, 2001;

Crowther, Martin & Shaw, 2007; Lovett et al, 1983; Mayo, 1997). The Landless People's Movement of Brazil (MST), for instance, believes that "to be an active citizen it is necessary to have an education to understand what is required and your role in it. Citizenship requires both an understanding and claiming of rights, followed by the exercising of these rights. To do so effectively requires critical consciousness" (Beck and Purcell, 2010: 59). Community education should therefore tackle the urgent problems and real concerns of people living in difficult circumstances by embracing a democratic learning framework.

Finally, community education and development are not only about the local. Craig & Mayo (cited in Beck & Purcell, 2010) argue that:

Community development is often thought of as an essentially local approach to problem solving. With globalisation of the economy and the emergence of transnational organisations concerned with social and/or economic issues. Community development needs to rethink its approach to incorporate a global dimension.

The global impacts on the local every day in many ways and this must be part of any community education endeavour. Poor communities throughout the world share many commonalities – their struggles are often about the same things, for example, access to housing, employment, clean water, and so forth. The Green Paper on PSET also emphasises the relationships between skills, employment, education and training (SEET). This comes at a time when international studies on these relationships point to the need for a much broader conception and understandings of these relationships (Brown, Lauder & Ashton, 2010).

2.3 Community education models¹

Various models of community education have been developed and applied over the years. These models reflect different emphases, educational pedagogies and roles of education in the process of bringing about change. These are briefly described below (for a more detailed description, see Rogers, 1992; Lovett et al, 1983):

2.3.1 Community organisation

This model combines aspects of community organisation and community work and relates these to adult education provision. This entails concentrating on the effective co-ordination and delivery of a wide variety of educational resources available to meet community needs and interests. It usually implies appointing community educators. This model is concerned with bringing education to the people in their own surroundings and on their own terms. The relationship between community education and social change is seen in terms of the contribution those who participate in these flexible adult education programmes can or will make to their own development and that of their community.

¹ This section is taken from Baatjes, I. 2004. Norms and Standards for Funding Public Adult Learning Centres. Quarterly Review of Education and Training in South Africa, 10 (6). which proposed the need for alternatives to PALCs.

2.3.2 Community development

This model concentrates on a mixture of community work and community development. Adult educators work in communities in a variety of community projects providing information, resources, advice and, when the occasion arises, opportunities for more systematic learning and training in specific skills and techniques relevant to such action (Lovett *et al*, 1983). In this community development model an effort is also made to educate the institutions and organisations concerned with the provision of services and resources for the local community. Community development and community education are viewed as processes which could involve the whole community in a concerted effort to resolve local problems. This model is concerned with local affairs and working closely with community groups and institutions.

2.3.3 Community action

This model places emphasis on combining community education and community action, on the role of conflict in resolving problems and the importance of creating alternative institutions and organisations. It emphasises the need for adult educators to identify with, and commit themselves to, local working class communities and the groups and organisations found in such communities. There is a strong belief that community action is in itself an educational process which offers opportunities for consciousness-raising about those wider arrangements in society which cause local problems. Initially the concern is with information for use in preparing plans. There are attempts to provide instrumental education for those engaged in community action, but the emphasis is also on radical political education. In this model the concept of community is also taken seriously as a base for action and education. It also affords opportunities for helping people to create, or recreate, alternative institutions at local level to control vital aspects of their everyday lives. The word community is popular because through it people can express this yearning for social wholeness, as opposed to an alienated and fragmented world.

2.3.4 Social action

This model emphasises motivation and content; hard educational effort; social rather than community action; working class rather than community education. This model is suspicious of the view that community action is, in itself, a learning process, or that just because an educator is involved in providing support and assistance for a particular local initiative it is an educational process. Education must be more structured and systematic. Education must act in solidarity with local people, align itself with local community action, and seek to provide specific forms of educational support which illuminate the problems which local people seek to resolve. There is also more stress on locating, through education, the origins of local community problems in the larger social, economic and political structures in society.

2.4 Community mobilisation and organising

Community mobilisation and organising are two crucial aspects of community education. Community mobilisation essentially refers to a process of bringing together a group of people in order to facilitate a participatory decision-making process. It is an educational process through which local individuals, groups or organisations identify needs, plan, carry out and evaluate activities on a participatory and sustained basis, so as to improve the conditions around a particular issue (Levene, undated). In other words it can be viewed as a process of bringing people into a dialogue to determine who, what and how issues are decided, and also to provide an avenue for everyone to participate in decisions that affect their lives. It is intended to accomplish genuine and sustainable community empowerment, participation and development. Lewin (cited in Schutz & Sandy, 2011) argues that those closest to any change must be involved in the change in order for the change to be effective. If there is not active involvement of those closest to the issues and problems, then the best policies in the world and/or the best ideas alone will not bring about any meaningful change.

Community organising is about working together as a group or collective with a view of bringing about change. There is more power in a group, than individually, and people work together to deal with and solve their issues and problems. Organising is about getting together to work for the common good – it is anti-individual. People are motivated to join – they need to know why they should join. In contrast with more cooperative approaches to community change (like ‘community development’), organisers believe that significant social change only comes through conflict with the entrenched interests of the status quo. In fact, organising groups usually *seek out* issues that are likely to generate controversy and tension (Schutz & Sandy, 2011: 12). It is simply not in the interests of people in relatively powerful positions to teach the less powerful how to resist them. It is argued that this is a basic fact of human society, not some elaborate conspiracy (Schutz & Sandy, 2011: 15). Organisers, in contrast, see not victims but potential actors in the same communities. While service professionals learn skills for helping people in crisis, then, organisers develop strategies for helping people come together to demand change (Schutz & Sandy, 2011: 22).

Activism and agency are important elements of community mobilisation and organising. Activism means acting and fighting for the values in which one believes. Activism is the cornerstone of community organising and without the involvement of activists community action is impossible. (Lamoureux, Mayer & Panet-Raymond, 1989: 26). Kgobe, Baatjes & Sotuku (2012) argue that activism and agency amongst youth involved in community education function as critical elements in school reform with specific reference to literacy and numeracy. This they argue is contrary to the dominant paradigm of psychological approaches which view youth as empty and inert vessels. Many of the youth in poor communities are social actors and agents who can change practices and social relations in communities. Therefore, youth and community activists are viewed as knowledge producers which inspire agency for personal and social transformation. Youth and adults involved in community education have demonstrated both agency and activism within socio-economic constraints and opportunities available in the communities in which they have worked.

2.5 Participation

The concept of participation has been central to discussions about education, citizenship and democracy. Participation, in both adult education and community education, has been widely discussed and argued for as essential to learning as well as effective Development (Rogers, 1993). For Anstein (1969) citizen participation means:

“... the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programmes are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled out. In short it is the means by which they can induce significant reform which enables them to share in the benefits of an affluent society” (Anstein cited in Purcell).

Applying Anstein’s idea of participation to community education and development activities is outlined by the Community Workers Co-operative’s documents (Purcell, 2005: 195). They outline what participation is and is not:

Participation is	Participation is not
▪ A process which empowers people; ▪ Active involvement of people; ▪ Process which enables people to develop skills, confidence and knowledge; ▪ Process which is deliberately chosen and resourced; ▪ Process which requires effort and time; ▪ Process which targets those who are marginalised and excluded; ▪ Promotes active involvement of end beneficiaries and users; ▪ Power sharing and negotiation between stakeholders; ▪ Based on the articulation of interests; ▪ Underpinned by a commitment to eliminating exclusion and inequality	▪ Giving information and assuming it is enough; ▪ Asking people what they think and then disregarding it; ▪ Deciding what is ‘good’ for people; ▪ A cheaper and quicker alternative to centralised planning; ▪ Involving people in planning but excluding them from implementation and monitoring; ▪ Involving people in activities without prior involvement in planning; ▪ Just contact the visible mainstream groups without targeting the marginalised and excluded

(See Purcell, 2005: 194)

Participation should be viewed as a process of empowerment of marginalised people; people's involvement in decision-making processes; and a process through which stakeholders influence control of development initiatives, decisions and resources. Arguing for a fuller exploration of participation, Clayton et al (1997), suggest that it is more useful to view participation in terms of a continuum on which participation moves from being merely nominal and representing little meaningful or direct involvement to a transformative participation, which results in people's empowerment and in direct and effective participation.

Participation as theory, practice, goal and process are all important to adult and community education. In the case of South Africa, current levels of participation in adult literacy and basic education are low. Statistics suggest that participation in ABET programmes is a mere 0.1% (See Baatjes, 2008; 2004). Adult learners experience multiple deterrents to participation including structural, situational and dispositional barriers. These deterrents are often associated with poverty, unemployment, health, food, shelter and other basic human needs. Incentives, community organising and social mobilisation strategies to increase participation and deliberate efforts to address deterrents need to be strongly considered.

2.6 Democracy and citizenship

Education has always been regarded by many as essential to the development of citizenship and democracy. (Gutmann, 1987; Freire, 1987). The interconnectedness of education with democracy, citizenship and participation is well-established and continues to serve as a reminder of the general role of education in societies. For Freire, illiteracy is a threat to the economic order of society, a profound injustice that threatens the fabric of democracy as well as undermining the principles of democracy (Freire & Macedo, 1987). And for Dewey, the absence of democratic habits of thought and action, as part of the fibre of people, poses a threat to democracy (Olssen et al, 2004: 269).

Gutmann, who has based her ideas on progressive critical thinkers such as Dewey and Freire, has developed a democratic theory of education that focuses on ways in which citizens are or should be empowered to influence the education that in turn shapes the political values, attitudes, and modes of behaviour of future citizens (Olssen et al, 2004: 269). Education for democratic citizenship, according to Gutmann, is more than merely curricula reform or reforms about frameworks of learning outcomes. What is required is a commitment to a framework of democratic learning (as described by Magison-Hyslop & Sears, 2010) in which educators embody within their own practice the values and disposition of democratic citizenship, as well as using their capabilities to create democratic learning environments within spaces of learning and teaching. “Only when we have communities educated into a deeper understanding of democratic principles will it be possible to involve them in a discussion which might become purposeful and effective in bringing about worthwhile change” (Olssen et al, 2004: 269).

Community education is an important sector through which citizenship for democracy should be developed. Community education, whether it focuses on youth or adults, will always concentrate on purposeful learning and education in communities designed to bring about change. It is often at the level of communities where people get their first experience of democracy. Therefore the expansion of opportunities for democratic life starts here where youth and adults can engage directly in issues and problems that affect their everyday lives. Government policies should provide possibilities for community education that develops clear analysis of the nature of poverty, inequality and marginalisation. Tett (2010) captures the vision of community education well. She argues that the vision of community education is:

...about education that moves away from inequitable, individualised, deficit models of learning and brings about change in understanding both self and society that leads on to a more equitable life for everyone. Having such a vision before us helps us to take those steps that in the end make a broad path as we walk towards a more democratically just society.

3. Data collection

Pairs of researchers visited the communities in the three provinces during February and March 2012 and held interviews with various groups of community members using an interview guide prepared for this purpose. Interviews of varied lengths, ranging from 10 minutes to two hours, were conducted. The details of the interviews are as follows:

Limpopo

- Five Motetema PALC Managers (four female, one male)
- 25 ABET learners, including youth and one male adult at the first PALC
- 32 ABET learners consisting of 28 youth (one male) and four female adults at a second PALC
- 30 participants who consisted of ABET learners and community project members at the third PALC. Five participants were adults, including one male. The rest were youth, including two males
- Sekhukhune Further Education and Training (FET) College Managers (Chief Executive Officer and Campus Manager – both male)
- Local Councillor (male)
- Two members of the Motetema Old Age Club – female chairperson and a male member
- Local Skills Co-ordinator (male).

KwaZulu-Natal

- 11 CBO and NGO representatives (three male)
- 18 urban youth from various communities in and around Pietermaritzburg (all female)
- 10 rural youth from Thandimpilo (all female)
- Five ABET learners and a facilitator (all male)
- 30 students enrolled in the Certificate in Education (Participatory Development) and MEd Adult Education Programmes
- 19 students enrolled in the Certificate in Education (Workplace Learning) Programme

The ratio of male to female participants in the student groups was evenly split. Many of the students work or volunteer at CBOs and NGOs or are members of social movements.

Gauteng

- 40 semi-urban youth and adults from Freedom Park (11 male). They are members of CBOs
- Six members from CBOs and NGOs (four female)
- 10 PALC managers and the Provincial Director of Adult Education and Training (Gauteng) (two female).

Interviews were generally conducted in English. In the case of Limpopo, Sesotho was also used. In KwaZulu-Natal, translation from isiZulu into English was done. Respondents were free to respond in the language of their choice to ensure full participation.

Given that interviews included both youth and adults, responses were recorded in terms of category, that is, youth or adult, taking into account cases where the two groups corroborated on an issue. Data from the interviews was organised and captured onto a tool according to themes and categories of respondents in order to aid analysis. The data was analysed in terms of themes. The views of the various respondents were compared and contrasted to capture nuances in the data.

4. Findings

4.1 Community mapping

A community mapping exercise was used in order to develop an understanding of organisational structures and resources available that could support community education. Instead of trying to develop an extensive physical map of communities, the exercise focused on the issues within the communities, such as: what issues face the community, uniqueness of the community, education and training needs, reasons for education and training, and how community needs are being met by existing education and training institutions and organisations. This exercise was not only useful for the purpose of the research, but also for the participants to reflect on their communities and how issues in their communities could be addressed through educational programmes.

4.2 Issues facing the community

Respondents provided a picture of a myriad of issues that plague the communities:

4.2.1 High unemployment and poverty

One of the issues that was raised by all groups was unemployment and its relationship to poverty. The communities from which the participants come all experience high levels of unemployment and poverty, as well as a lack of services and poor infrastructure. For example, poor services relate to a shortage of water, no electricity, poor sanitation, no tarred roads and, in the rural context, people living in mud houses. Some of the participants have been unemployed for many years and some have never been able to access a job.

Participants also made clear connections between education, skills, unemployment and poverty. There is a recognition of existing knowledge and skill within communities, while at the same time, a view that people do require education and skills development. Participants provided a number of explanations regarding this. First, participants argued that there are many people in their communities who have acquired different kinds of knowledge and skills, but may not have the necessary certification that captures these. For instance, there are community members who can build houses and do other work related to infrastructural development. Many community members with uncertified knowledge and skills find it very difficult to find employment. As a result, many people in communities are trapped in poverty. Second, participants expressed the view that education and training are essential in addressing a variety of different community issues and problems. For instance, alcohol and drug abuse, crime and teenage pregnancy were listed, amongst other, as some of the issues and problems that require an educational response. Third, technical skills, such as bricklaying, sewing and welding, are also some of the skills that participants listed as important. Fourth, as a result of poverty and unemployment, many youth and adults experience difficulty in accessing educational programmes. Poverty is clearly a barrier in this case. According to FET Managers in Limpopo, projects often fail to take off as every time they think of initiating a community project, the issue of affordability by community members stands in the way of pursuing such. They gave an example of a bricklaying project which the FET College sought to undertake. The cost of the project was prohibitively high, therefore it was abandoned. A number of other structural and situational barriers exist, including the cost of and available transport to a venue that is far from the community.

There are many perceptions of who is able to access employment and who is not. For example, in Pietermaritzburg, a participant felt that people over the age of 35 are not getting employed because of their age. In Sekhukhune, a participant felt that a school-leaving certificate should be a prerequisite for all jobs as people with lower or no education are being favoured in terms of low-level jobs, while those with school-leaving certificates are without jobs. These examples suggest a sense of desperation and frustration among adults and youth in relation to unemployment.

4.2.2 High drop-out rate

In Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, the high attrition rates amongst children and youth were mentioned. This was attributed to high unemployment and poverty which result in children being compelled to seek work. This problem is also linked to an increase in the number of street children who often migrate to the city centres. A CETC could cater for youth and children who drop out of school and counselling could be provided for them at the Centre.

4.2.3 Alcohol and drug abuse

Alcohol and drug abuse appears to be a common problem across communities. According to the chairperson of the Motetema Old Age Club, dagga use is equated to cigarette use amongst youth. There are also claims that youth experiment with hard core drugs such as Nyaope. The

Local Councillor's view is that youth are not interested in education. His view of youth is that they would rather spend time at the local tavern and engage in prostitution. There seems to be some collusion with the police in this regard. This is a concern given that the police should protect the youth and their communities, rather than encouraging such behaviour. The view of the Councillor was corroborated by the Skills Co-ordinator and some youth at one of the PALCs. For the Skills Co-ordinator, youth in the community were only interested in hand-outs and do not want to study. This attitude is attributed to a lack of parental guidance, the lack of good role-models and the need for instant gratification. In contrast to this view, participants in the other two sites connected alcoholism and drug abuse to poverty, unemployment and crime. The issue of alcohol and drug abuse is clearly of great concern and suggestions for how it should be addressed include: (a) school-based programmes and campaigns, and (b) educational programmes at the CETCs. This could include the role that police should play in safety and security of communities.

4.2.4 Crime

A further issue facing the community is that of crime. Crime takes on a number of forms ranging from the illegal selling of alcohol and drugs to cable theft. According to both youth and adults at one of the centres in Sekhukhune, the unfortunate thing is that when the community reports such crimes, the police divulge names of complainants to the perpetrators thereby putting complainants' lives in danger. As a result, community members are reluctant to report cases of crime. In the other two sites similar examples were given, which suggests that there is a need for educational programmes that can respond to issues related to crime. The roles of community police fora and the Department of Community Safety in crime prevention and management were raised.

4.2.5 Suicide amongst youth

An increasing rate of suicide among youth was another issue raised by the Sekhukhune participants. This was so rife that the Old Age Club resolved to hold a prayer meeting to pray about the issue on 17 February 2012. According to one of the youth, she wished youth in the community could come together and seek solutions to the issues facing them. It was also suggested at one of the centres that a social worker should be involved to assist the community in relation to suicide problems. The issue of suicide was not raised in the other sites, however, the need for counselling and the involvement of social workers was raised. Counselling and social worker support are also needed to deal with drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy and child abuse.

4.2.6 Teenage pregnancy and child abuse

Teenage pregnancy was also raised as an issue at all centres. Youth pointed out that teenage pregnancy results in an interruption of a person's education, particularly that of girls, as they find themselves with no one to look after their children. The issue of child abuse was raised in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. In Freedom Park, the community had been dealing with a serious child abuse case and this highlighted the issue of vulnerable children.

4.2.7 Health issues (HIV & AIDS & TB)

Health issues were raised in Johannesburg and Pietermaritzburg. In Pietermaritzburg a number of NGOs and CBOs working in health education with specific focus on HIV and AIDS and TB were mentioned. All these NGOs and CBOs provide well-developed curricula as part of their community education work, which includes a focus on vulnerable children and people living with HIV and AIDS. The importance of home-based care and basic healthcare training were also mentioned. A group of caregivers in KwaZulu-Natal explained the importance of their work in rural KZN, but expressed their disappointment at the lack of home-based care kits which prohibits them from doing their work well. These kits are not easily available to them.

4.2.8 Boredom

Another issue raised was that of boredom facing youth and the community at large. Views expressed included the importance of recreational activities in dealing with boredom and engaging youth and children. Participants identified a variety of arts, cultural and sporting activities that could enhance participation in productive activities. A range of sports activities, such as soccer, netball, swimming and bowls were suggested. Edu-tainment programmes as well as the role that libraries could play in communities were also mentioned. The absence of libraries and other facilities that could host these activities remains a serious concern. In the case of some of the communities in KwaZulu-Natal and in Freedom Park, no facilities exist whereas in Limpopo there are structures, but they remain under-utilised. The Motetema Community Hall in Sekhukhune, for example, could be used for recreational purposes, but disagreements amongst community members about its use have resulted in its under-utilisation.

4.2.9 Access to markets

In some of the communities, numerous art and craft wares such as beadwork, mats and handiwork are produced. However, often the artists and crafters fail to access the necessary markets as they do not have access to larger markets. This problem is compounded by a lack of knowledge about how markets work and a lack of business skills. The issue of access to markets also applies to those selling agricultural products, especially those in rural areas. The harassment of informal traders by the police was also mentioned in relation to one not being able to sell one's products.

4.2.10 Access to information

Access to information is a serious problem in all communities. Participants mentioned different kinds of information that could benefit them, for example information about bursaries for students, career opportunities, job opportunities and para-legal advice. CETCs could house computers with internet access.

4.3 Communities are unique

Community is best understood as a geographically-based human relationship between a number of people who may or may not know each other, share a sense of purpose and values

and interact in their work, play and family and share power to shape their lives (Kgobe, Baatjes and Sotuku, 2012). Community is therefore not simply a geographic location but constituted by a collection of individuals who are linked through significant connections. The interconnectedness of people who share a history, sets of values and a sense of belonging require detailed understanding for any form of community education, community mobilisation and community action to work. Local connections are therefore of critical importance to community education, organising, mobilisation and action. The data from these communities clearly suggests that communities are very different and that community education should be locally-oriented and informed by its contextual realities. Whilst all the communities have in common a number of similar problems, including poverty, unemployment and under-education, they are unique in terms of the networks of relations that constitute them.

In rural contexts, such as Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal, traditional leaders play a significant role in shaping community development and community educational projects. This is not the case in semi-urban or urban centres where traditional leadership structures do not form part of the hierarchy of power. In semi-urban and urban centres, power is often vested in the Local Councillor and Managers and Principals of PALCs and FET Colleges.

Communities, due to their contextual differences, require community education programmes based on their particular needs. Therefore the spaces within communities that would house CETCs could be very different as well as the kinds of curricula offered (For instance, in Gauteng alone there are more than 170 schools currently not in use). There may well be a common core curriculum that they all share, accompanied by community-specific curricula.

4.4 Education and training needs

The participants involved in this data collection process unanimously agreed on the importance of education and training provision and delivery in their communities. There is general agreement that education and training opportunities should be expanded as part of community development projects, for example some communities do not have reasonable access to FET Colleges, while others are poorly served. Some participants support the view that colleges closed over the last 10 years need to be re-opened and that more higher education and training institutions be established.

In addressing the education and training needs of communities, PALC Managers in Limpopo raised a few concerns. First, access for ABET learners to FET Colleges is difficult and this causes much frustration among community members. Second, many youth and adults are compelled to pursue further education and training at colleges in other provinces. While this is related to access to local colleges, some youth seek admission to other institutions because they prefer to study elsewhere. The problem with this is that only those who can afford to study elsewhere can go. Three, access to Matric is limited because it is not offered at the local PALC, but is offered in other provinces. Four, the lack of adult educators who teach Mathematics is problematic because certain courses at FET Colleges, such as Engineering, require Mathematics at NQF Level 1. Five, PALC Managers expressed concern that many of the youth

who have acquired skills in the areas of fence-making, bricklaying and motor mechanics, are unable to apply their skills because opportunities for them to do so are limited. Six, many examples of non-formal education and training currently exist in communities ranging from agricultural activities, arts and crafts and basic skills necessary for infrastructural development. However, quite often there are limited spaces within communities available where these skills can be harnessed and shared with others.

CBOs and NGOs continue to play important roles in the provision of community education. Unfortunately many of these civil society organisations have withdrawn from communities due to a decline in donor funding and pressure to conform to accreditation requirements which have become necessary to retain their operations. New CBOs are emerging in both semi-urban and rural communities as a direct result of community needs. For instance, in KwaZulu-Natal, a group of volunteers have established a CBO directly as a result of concerns related to health and the need for home-based care. In the case of Freedom Park, a Community Literacy and Numeracy Group (CLING) does community literacy work to support literacy education in the primary schools. CBOs and NGOs provide important contributions to community education and should inform the form and substance of community education programmes.

4.5 Reasons for education and training

Youth and adults gave as the reason for education and training to be a means of securing employment. This is unsurprising given the high unemployment rate mentioned earlier. However, further discussion about the relationship between skills, employment, education and training (SEET) raised questions about reasons for South Africa's high unemployment rate and international trends that reflect the same problem. Besides education and training for employment, participants also provided other reasons for education and training: personal development; community development and addressing socio-political problems. According to one of the youth in Limpopo, "personal development is needed, not just wanted."

4.6 Existing institutions and community needs

Existing institutions play a limited role in meeting community needs. At present the two main institutional forms are PALCs and FET Colleges. However, CBOs and NGOs were also mentioned. PALCs, according to the data provided, are increasingly attracting youth. The participation rate is low which reflects the national trend. Adults who have acquired the ability to read and write attach great value to the PALCs while others find the programmes limiting. For example, some participants were critical of the way adults are taught and questioned whether the ABET programmes are in accordance with the educational levels of the majority of adults who could benefit from ABET. In addition to this, participants questioned why adult educators employed at the Freedom Park PALC do not live in Freedom Park. Existing programmes fall short of addressing the issues and concerns of community members and their lived realities.

The key problem with FET Colleges is access. Participants felt that skills development programmes offered by FET Colleges should be linked to local infrastructural development and other community development projects. For instance, participants in some of the communities were critical of municipal tenders related to infrastructural development. They argued that an alternative to tenders be considered in which the skills within communities are harnessed, developed and used for projects related to infrastructural development. This, they suggested, could contribute to addressing unemployment and poverty in their communities. Therefore the way in which municipalities could create new categories of local employment for community development requires critical exploration. While FET Colleges are viewed as important sites, they should not be limited to technical skills training.

In addition to the two formal institutions, the educational programmes provided by civil society groups have been highlighted. These programmes seem to respond more directly to immediate community concerns. The problem, however, is the limited resources available to these organisations to impact on the greater part of communities. Volunteer groups also play a critical role which suggests that youth have agency in identifying and responding to community problems. Some youth in Freedom Park and Pietermaritzburg have served as volunteers for five years which reflects a deep commitment to the upliftment of their communities. These community networks suggest possibilities for partnerships that could provide community education in a much more coherent and integrated way.

5. Imagining CETCs

This section begins to suggest how CETCs could address community needs by looking at conceptions of community education and training as well as provision-related issues, particularly programme requirements, governance, staffing, delivery venue, mode of provision, programme forms, providers, access issues, and funding.

5.1 Conceptions of community education and training

PALC Managers and FET Managers seem to have limited conceptions of community education. PALC Managers in Limpopo had difficulty providing an understanding of community education, whereas PALC Managers in Gauteng had an expanded view of community education. The Limpopo PALC Managers provided numerous examples of community education once prompted. They listed, amongst other, education programmes related to farming, health and sewing. In the case of the Gauteng PALC Managers, there seems to have been more discussion about community education and a growing realisation that current ABET programmes are limited. The Gauteng PALC Managers also face a greater demand for more programmes.

According to FET Managers in Limpopo, community education is a concept where community members can be trained on different skills, for example numeracy, reading and writing, but also to complete qualifications that can lead to employment opportunities. It also involves non-formal education where communities could be trained on things like basic motor

mechanics and the green economy. Also of importance for the community are entrepreneurial skills. An example was given of community members who lack the skills to complete tender documents. Linked to this is that of members who manage to secure tenders but are unable to deliver the services because of a lack of skills. Community education and training could assist in this regard.

CBOs and NGOs offer a variety of programmes that respond to community problems, issues and concerns. These educational programmes are often linked to projects designed to respond to a particular issue. For example, co-operatives with an agricultural focus have been established in some communities. The work conducted by these organisations contributes to feeding schemes that provide food and food security in rural settings. In Limpopo, a vegetable clinic garden project was used in this way. Many examples of community education programmes provided by CBOs and NGOs exist, but lack the necessary status they deserve as important contributors to community development.

5.2 Governance

Currently PALCs are supposed to be governed by PALC Governing Bodies. PALCs have experienced endless difficulties with their governing bodies and, in most cases, these governing bodies do not exist. Respondents strongly felt that CETCs should be community-driven institutions and should offer both the youth and adults an opportunity to play a role in the governance of CETCs. For instance, the programmes offered by CETCs should be determined by a CETC Governing Body that privileges the needs of its community. The Governing Body of a CETC would require ongoing training and capacity-building to ensure that the CETC is well run.

5.3 Staffing

Respondents believe it is important that the staff employed at a CETC should be drawn from the community in which it is located. The CETC could, therefore, offer employment opportunities to unemployed youth and adults who are provided with appropriate training to run such a centre. Staffing should also consider the knowledge and skill requirements of the programmes offered at the CETC. For example, some of the CBOs and NGOs would be in the best position to offer programmes related to problems and issues specific to a community. Home-based care and ancillary healthcare should be offered by a trainer of home-based care or a nurse. Staffing should therefore reflect the curricula, both formal and non-formal, offered at a CETC.

5.4 Programme requirements

Generally, both youth and adults lamented the lack of a practical component in ABET. This has always been a common concern about ABET in various sectors of society, including industry-based programmes (Baatjes, Motala & Hamilton, 2011; Baatjes, 2002; Baatjes, Aitchison & John, 2002). Similarly to previous research, adults and youth involved in this multiple case study suggested that education and training programmes for youth and adults

should have both theoretical and practical components in their content. Youth recommended that the local FET College should establish relations with organisations and companies through which students can be incorporated in education and training programmes that provide practical experience, such as apprenticeships, learnerships, internships and so forth. Some of the learnerships and apprenticeships that provide forms of situated cognition could be, according to the interviewees, connected to community needs, for instance some practical programmes directly connected to the local economic development programmes of municipalities and the EPWP of the Department of Public Works. Respondents recognise that both these programmes serve as useful employment-generating initiatives and could provide both education and training, as well as job opportunities for urban and rural youth and adults. A variety of educational programmes were suggested, including those that are currently being offered by existing education and training institutions. Most of the programmes suggested fall within the health sector (ancillary healthcare and nursing), services sector (beauty therapy; hospitality and tourism) and some in the engineering sector (electrical engineering and computer training).

Respondents in all three sites also emphasised the need for programmes directly linked to the social difficulties experienced by communities (socially-driven rather than economic). Programmes and areas of arts and culture (sport, dancing, etc) were also mentioned. In some communities such as rural KZN, both NGOs and CBOs play a significant role in the provision and delivery of such programmes. Communities require skills development in these areas.

It was also suggested that both community radio and newspapers could be used as a mechanism to inform communities about the availability of education and training programmes.

5.5 Delivery venue

Schools remain ideal sites for the delivery of community education programmes. Some PALC Managers felt that education and training programmes for youth and adults should be provided in existing schools. They, however, pointed out a number of problems with PALCs accommodated in schools. These include situational barriers, such as time, lack of appropriate furniture, access to basic resources and the payment of accounts, such as electricity. This is an ongoing problem that many PALCs have experienced over the last decade. In the case of Gauteng where some PALCs exist as separate centres, the difficulties raised above by PALCs located in school buildings are limited or non-existent. The Gauteng model of funding PALCs offers useful ideas of how community education centres could be supported. For instance the GDE is already looking at how some of the vacant 171 schools could be utilised as educational centres with earmarked budgets, managed by Centre Managers.

Respondents also suggested that alternative sites for community education programmes need to be considered. In both urban and rural communities existing community halls are often under-utilised and could serve as additional centres where community education programmes could be offered. This may include FET Colleges which are most appropriate especially for adults and youth interested in technical programmes that are currently offered by these colleges.

Another suggestion was the use of mobile units equipped with the necessary resources. This idea has the potential for taking education and training to youth and adults in communities where they would not otherwise receive it if more traditional ways of offering education and training are used. NGOs and CBOs echoed the idea of mobile units or satellites through which community education programmes could be delivered to communities, especially those in a rural context. This could be combined with forms of technology, such as distance education programmes for youth and adults with higher levels of education.

In some cases, new buildings may have to be erected in communities where appropriate facilities do not exist. Rural communities often do not have appropriate facilities and development projects of the municipalities, traditional leaders and government departments need to take into account community educational needs as part of infrastructural development. At present the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) is planning the establishment of 21 FETCs, and the construction of these FETCs should carefully consider their use as CETCs.

5.6 Mode of provision

Respondents suggested that programmes should be offered as both full-time and part-time programmes. Ideally the CETC should be accessible throughout the day because many youth and adults remain unemployed and could, therefore, attend face-to-face programmes on a full-time basis. Programmes, however, should also accommodate those who work and this requires more flexible modes of provision and delivery. CETCs should be accessible at night and distance education programmes for those with higher levels of education should be available.

5.7 Programme forms

Respondents recognised the importance of both formal and non-formal programmes. Formal programmes that lead to qualifications and certification are perceived as crucial to gain employment. This view is not an unexpected one given the high levels of unemployment, the formalisation of education and rampant ‘diploma disease’ in South Africa. The formalisation of education has also affected the work of many CBOs and NGOs that felt compelled to pursue accreditation of their programmes which means certification. With the decline of donor support, accreditation has also become an access route to the National Skills Fund and to SETA funding.

Respondents also recognised the need and value of non-formal programmes. In this case, non-formal programmes were seen as important ways of increasing community participation and in addressing immediate problems that may exist. These programmes could also be very specific to communities rather than general and broad. CETCs should therefore create space for people to simply share knowledge and skills in a social and convivial way.

5.8 Providers

Respondents proposed a variety of providers of community education and training. Firstly, PALCs and FET Colleges are viewed as important institutions that should exist in all communities. In cases where these institutions are not present, clear links between them and communities should be made. CETCs should therefore provide programmes in technical vocational education and training as well as in adult education. Secondly, CBOs and NGOs offer programmes that are important and directly linked to problems and issues in communities. CETCs could also provide space for NGOs and CBOs to offer their programmes. Thirdly, CETCs should be community-driven and should draw on the knowledge and skills that exist within communities. Respondents argued that their communities possess pools of essential knowledge and skills that are overlooked. Fourthly, CETCs should develop relationships with other institutions such as universities to support community education and development. Fifthly, CETCs should also develop relationships with parastatals and the business sector which could provide additional resources to support the functioning of CETCs.

5.9 Access

The general view held by youth and adults is that institutions should be flexible to cater for people at various levels of education. CETCs should have open access and encourage people to participate in both their formal and non-formal programmes. Whilst access requirements to some formal programmes may be necessary, youth and adults should have reasonable access to formal programmes even if they do not want qualifications. Access to FET Colleges requires urgent attention as many adults and youth who have completed NQF 1 programmes experience difficulty in accessing FET College programmes. There is also a need to increase the number of educational institutions within the community.

5.10 Funding

Respondents proposed a number of funding avenues for CETCs. Respondents in general argued strongly that funding of programmes is the responsibility of government. This includes funding from the local municipality, DHET and the Department of Labour. Some respondents felt that the local municipality through their LEDs and Integrated Development Plans should be central to infrastructural development and programme support of CETCs. As these programmes should be free, government should take responsibility for funding community education programmes. A second source of funding is the NSF and the SETAs. Communities feel that NSF-related and SETA-funded projects are limited and must be increased. A third source of funding identified by respondents is donor funding. Respondents generally valued the contributions made by CBOs and NGOs, and argued that community-driven projects with support from NGOs and CBOs remain imperative. Many educational programmes provided by NGOs and CBOs are of good quality but not accredited. These organisations and their programmes should be valued and protected, whether they are accredited or not. Respondents also argued that the corporate sector should increase its support for community education and training programmes. Although a number of companies contribute through their Corporate

Social Investment initiatives, they could do more given the wealth created through their economic interests. Many respondents argued that education should be free and that citizens should be provided with bursaries to complete their studies. These bursaries could come from the various funding options proposed above.

6. Conclusion and implications for CETCs

From this multiple case study involving a range of respondents, it is evident that the conceptualisation of CETCs needs to give careful consideration to the following:

6.1 Communities are heterogeneous

Communities are not homogeneous, but rather heterogeneous and multi-faceted and do not easily fit the pre-determined descriptions or the values and other spiritual, territorial, economic or 'national' attributes by which communities might be defined (Kgobe, Baatjes, Sotuku, 2012). Communities need to be understood as geographically-based human relationships between a number of people who share a sense of purpose and values and interact in their work, play, and family and share power to shape their lives. Community is therefore not simply a geographic location but constituted by a collection of individuals who are linked through significant connections. The inter-connectedness of people who share a history, sets of values and a sense of belonging require detailed understanding for any form of community education to work. Therefore the role of a Community Education and Training Centre cannot be imposed but rather proposed in relation to the community needs that exist.

6.2 Communities value education and training

Communities generally value education for the good of community and see it as integral to the development of participatory citizenship and advancing democracy. Although communities may not have clear understandings of community education, they do not hold narrow views about education, but rather attach different purposes to it. Education is viewed as a mechanism for personal development, community development, socio-political participation as well as for economic development.

6.3 Community education should respond to community problems and issues

Communities do not view community education as the panacea for resolving social issues, but see it as a mechanism that can play a role in addressing them. Community education is regarded as a vehicle in addressing a wide range of issues including such things as health, poverty and shelter.

6.4 Community participation in community education

Community involvement in community education is currently limited and communities would prefer greater participation in educational programmes. Youth and adults have shown both interest and agency in the establishment of community education programmes through the formation of community-based organisations, community organising and the establishment of

community education programmes. Agency is further evident in the commitment expressed by youth and adults to run the CETCs.

6.5 Community education and civil society

Civil society organisations continue to play important roles in community education. The work of CBOs and NGOs remain critical to many communities. This work is valued and seen as important responses to immediate socio-economic problems and issues experienced by both urban and rural poor. The curricula offered are often useful for community development and should form part of the expansion of community education programmes.

6.6 Flexible programmes

Programmes offered should be formal and non-formal and accessible throughout communities. These programmes should respond to the various purposes of education (personal development, community development, socio-political participation and economic development).

6.7 Multiple funding streams

While communities see government as the main funding organ, they also recognise the need for additional funding support from the NSF, SETAs, the corporate sector and donors. Traditional funding formulae informed by cost-based analysis may not be appropriate and alternative funding formulae informed by social impact analysis may prove to be more useful.

6.8 Community education and networks

Community education should be connected to a variety of other institutional forms that can support its work and provide articulation routes for youth and adults into further education, technical education and continuing education programmes.

7 Proposed Framework for CETC: Implications

7.1 Principles and concepts

Based on the multiple case study, various research reports on ABET in South Africa and other studies and experiences related to community education, we propose a framework of community education and training centres which we believe could be more responsive to the education and training needs of both urban and rural communities than presently addressed by PALCs. We suggest that a singular model is unlikely to respond effectively to communities that are multi-faceted and heterogeneous and, therefore, the proposed framework should accommodate various possible models for CETCs. For instance, some CETCs, especially in rural contexts, should serve as multi-purpose centres where adults and youth have access to different kinds of support (i.e. information, counselling, libraries, etc.). Furthermore, depending on the contextual circumstances, CETCs could also be a site for technical and vocational education and training, provide a space for training of adult educators and

community workers and/or simply act as a space for various forms of non-formal education programmes. We believe the proposed framework offers various permutations of CETCs that could reflect the education and training needs within particular contexts, be they rural or urban.

The proposed framework is underpinned by a number of important principles and concepts. Firstly, we support the education of youth and adults as a public good and that all citizens should have access to quality education as enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa. Secondly, the education of youth and adults is regarded as critical to an inclusive democracy and the development of active and participatory citizenship. The notion of active participatory citizenship is envisaged as an important outcome of both non-formal and formal education. The education of youth and adults – formal and non-formal – should enable them to participate in the social, political, economic and civic spheres of life. Thirdly, participation is central to the social transformation of communities and society, and education should enable people to participate through informed judgments and decisions about issues and problems experienced in communities and society. Our conception of participation is viewed as a process of empowerment of marginalised people, people's involvement in decision-making processes, and processes through which people influence control of development initiatives, decisions and resources. Participation, therefore, is based on a commitment to understand the role of education in the promotion of democracy, social justice and human rights. Fourthly, community mobilisation also forms an important principle in realising effective community education and training. Bringing community members and groups together in identifying needs, developing plans and evaluating activities in a participatory and sustained way in order to improve the conditions around particular issues, is an important aspect of participatory community education. Community mobilisation is therefore intended to accomplish genuine and sustainable community empowerment, participation and development. Activism and agency are two very important concepts that form part of community mobilisation. Activism and agency are central to community organising, participation and social mobilisation, and necessary and integral to community education.

7.2 Adopting democratic learning principles/approaches

Policy and practice for community education and training should be founded on the underpinnings of a democratic society which views collective improvement in quality of life as the primary goal of its educational initiatives (UNESCO). A society based on the ideals of an inclusive democracy, which provides citizens with the tools needed to participate in creating the conditions for their career and vocational experience as future workers and citizens, should inform a national CET system for South Africans. **All citizens should therefore be provided with the opportunity for a lifetime of intellectual growth, vocational enrichment and social improvement.** It is therefore important that CET, which consists of a combination of career education and citizenship education, should be based on the principles of democratic learning. We believe that career education and citizenship education, when appropriately conceived and implemented, can contribute to creating participatory and critical reflective citizens (Magison-Hyslop & Sear, 2010: 57). In order to achieve this, we need to: (1) create democratic spaces for

learning and teaching; (2) ensure a pedagogy that fosters active participation; and (3) ensure that learning respects divergent views. The three critical principles of democratic learning that should inform both career and citizenship education are: (a) respect for student rationality; (b) entertaining alternative perspectives; and (c) appreciation for the distinction between social and natural reality. Allman (2001) adds additional principles of a democratic learning framework to those suggested by Magison-Hyslop & Sears. She draws from Freirean education or critical pedagogy and proposes principles specific to classroom practice. These principles offer meaningful guidance for people involved in community learning and education.

These principles include:

- Mutual respect, humility, openness, trust and cooperation
- Commitment to learning to “read the world” critically
- Vigilance of one’s own and the group’s progress in developing a deeper and more critical understanding of whatever aspect of reality they are co-investigating
- Honesty and truth – an “ethics of authenticity” – this involves the sharing of feelings and is part of the ‘openness and trust’ and ‘commitment’ listed above
- Passion – “it’s inner connection with critically “reading” the world”

She further lists aims and objectives of this approach to education. Aims and objectives usually indicate some sort of finality, but in this approach to education, there is no finality – it is a process of ongoing learning and discovering. The *process* is imperative.

- Critical and creative thinking which together lead to realistic hope
- Transformation of self and the social relations of learning and teaching
- Democratisation - learning to live and act in cooperation with others
- Embracing and internalising the principles
- Unquenchable thirst for understanding or genuine critical curiosity
- Solidarity and commitment to self and social transformation and the project of humanisation

(For further explanation of principles of democratic learning, see Magison-Hyslop, 2010; Allman, 2002).

These principles are designed to ensure citizenship, technical, work-oriented and career education that support the development of informed, reflective and politically-empowered workers and citizens. The implementation of these principles as part of a broader community education programme should adhere to a Bill of Rights for Youth and Adults (See Appendix B).

7.3 Describing the framework

As stated earlier, the primary purpose of community education is education *within* and *for* communities (Tett, 2010). Community education, therefore, encourages and engages people into learning based on community interests, issues and problems. Education is developed in response to community priorities identified with people rather than for them and with a commitment to allow genuine alternative and democratic agendas to emerge at the local level.

The CET programme consists of a variety of formal and non-formal citizenship, technical and career education programmes informed by a democratic learning framework. The proposed framework, therefore, draws on the various community education models described in Section Two. Some communities may commit to a singular community education model, whereas others may prefer a mixture of one or two of the models described (See community education models described in Section Two). The framework suggests that the CETC should mobilise all forms of education into the service of the community by drawing from a variety of networks (relationships) that exist within, but not limited to, the community in which it is located.

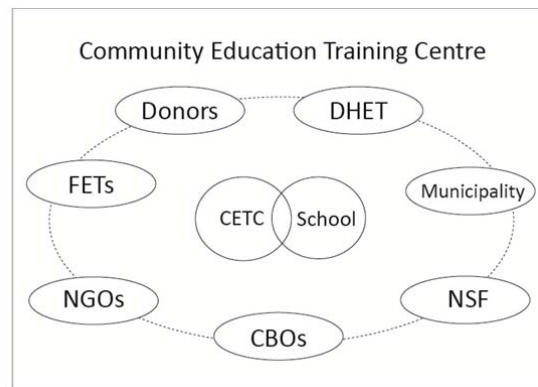


Fig: 1: Framework for Community Education and Training Centres

The CETC should build good relationships with the primary schools in its community. This is particularly important in rural areas where much of the education revolves around schools. It is also important that the CETC utilises the resources immediately available in the community as well as mobilising from the local municipality, local and international donors as well as various national resources from government departments. Community networks and relationships are used to inform the institutional form of the CETC, its operations, staffing, curriculum and so forth.

7.3.1 Governance

This framework proposes a community-driven approach that represents the ideas, needs and wants of members of the community rather than being imposed by outsiders. It, therefore, suggests that a CETC should encourage a governance structure that is representative of all the networks of relationships that exist within a community. In other words, a CETC should be governed by all the key stakeholders and roleplayers in a community. Mechanisms that resonate with the rhythms of communities need to be explored and used to ensure that community needs permeate CET and processes within CETCs.

Implications: The establishment of a CETC Governing Body has to be conceptualised differently to the current (and non-existent) PALC Governing Bodies. This presents an

immediate implication for current legislation and should be carefully considered as part of new legislation.

7.3.2 Sites of delivery

This framework suggests that the choice of sites of delivery be based on community mapping exercises to determine which sites could be CETCs (whether existing or not) or a satellite of a CETC. Some of the sites, in addition to existing schools, could be FET Colleges, community halls or vacant buildings. In some instances, especially in rural areas, structures for CETCs may have to be built.

CET programmes should be provided though:

- existing education and training sites;
- community-based sites;
- school buildings;
- CBO/NGO sites.

Implications: Similarly to 7.3.1, the use of buildings requires careful consideration because, by law, legislated centres are juristic persons with responsibilities and funding prescriptions. In addition to this, a different name may need to be used to differentiate between CETCs and other institutions, such as FET Colleges and schools, if accommodated in the same building. Although some schools that double up as PALCs have shown ways of accommodating two juristic persons in the same building, there have been problems with this, and it will need to be addressed if a CETC is housed in an existing school.

7.3.3 Mode of delivery

Adults and youth are not a homogeneous group. They have different needs and are motivated to attend educational and training events for different reasons. In order to improve participation, it is necessary to focus on their different interests and motivations, as well as social and economic priorities. The research suggests that adults and youth are motivated by desires for educational and training advancement, self-improvement, literacy development, economic gain, meeting family and community needs, job advancement and finding new careers. Differentiated programmes could play a significant role in increasing participation.

Programmes should be provided on a full-time and part-time basis using face-to-face instruction and distance education methods.

Each CETC should attempt to increase participation without compromising the quality of provision and delivery. Different social mobilisation strategies should be developed and used.

7.3.4 Access

Adults and youth in need of educational programmes must have equal access to high quality programmes. There must be provision for ensuring accessibility and availability of programmes in all communities. Co-ordination of CET should ensure that the following conditions are met:

- Programmes should be available throughout the entire area served by CET;
- All CET programmes should be provided free of charge;
- CET programmes should be located on a public transportation route, or within reasonable walking distance of a public transportation route. In areas with concentrated populations, programmes should be provided in a variety of locations including community centres or other focal points in the community where appropriate facilities are available;
- In rural areas, programmes should be provided in local libraries if available, schools or any other available and appropriate public or community facilities;
- All CETCs should have programmes available at a variety of times throughout the day and the week. At least 60% of programmes should provide instruction during the evenings and on weekends;
- In order to ease the transition of learners from CET programmes to other programmes, at least 50% of CET-level programming should be provided in places where other adult education programmes are provided;
- All CET programmes should establish linkages with other adult education programmes, whether or not they are located in the same place;
- Programmes which are located in institutions (for example, colleges, schools and libraries) should be prominently located and should reflect the programme's equal status with other adult education programmes;
- At least 60% of programmes within an area should be accessible to the physically disabled;
- The CETC should ensure that learners are aware of, and have access to, all available support services including income support, transportation allowances, and quality day-care facilities;
- All CETCs should make provision for first language CET programmes where a need is expressed;
- All CETCs should provide a proportion of programmes which do not limit the amount of time a learner may attend;
- Each CETC should establish programmes where none exist, even in cases where only a few

learners are prepared to join the programme at the outset; and

- In order to ensure that all adults and youth in a CETC area are aware of programme offerings, it will be necessary to develop a strategy to publicise programmes. (It is recommended that an outreach person who is familiar with the geography, the demographics, and the range of services in the region be an integral part of the publicising strategy).

7.3.5 Staffing

Adults and youth who enter programmes should be entitled to quality education which will make it possible for them to make significant progress in learning, training and development. This will require that programmes select suitable and qualified teaching staff and that they provide the conditions which will guarantee maximum opportunity for successful learning.

The following conditions should govern staffing arrangements:

- There should be a relatively low learner: educator ratio. The optimal learner: educator ratio for CET-level education is about 12:1. This (ideal and high cost) ratio may vary depending on the average level of skills within a group of learners;
- In groups where there are special needs, including for example physical or mental disability, a ratio of 6:1 may be more appropriate. Ratios bigger than 20:1 are usually dysfunctional;
- In programmes where there are learners with special needs, teaching assistants should be employed to assist with those special needs. The employment of teaching assistants should not, however, affect the learner: teacher ratio. Similarly, where volunteer assistance is utilised in CET programmes, the volunteers should not affect the ratio of paid educators to learners;
- All programmes within a CETC should have access to the services of the learning specialist, the resource centre librarian, the outreach worker, and the programme co-ordinator;
- There should be adequate provision of secretarial support staff for programme co-ordinators and educators;
- There should be clearly defined job descriptions for all staff;
- Teaching staff should be paid and expected to do regular teaching preparation. At least one hour of paid preparation time for every five hours teaching is the recommended ratio;
- Educators should be involved in the ongoing development of programmes. It is recommended that at least 5% of all educators' employment time be allocated specifically for programme development work;
- Teaching positions in CET must be long-term, permanent positions if programme stability is to be achieved. As far as possible, teaching positions should be full-time positions; and

- The salaries and benefits of programme co-ordinators, educators, specialists, and support staff in CET programmes should be equal to those provided for similar level positions in all other areas of the education system.

Implications: The training of staff working in CETCs requires an expansion of units within universities currently offering adult education programmes. Every HEI will have to establish Centres for Adult Education who could serve the needs of CETCs in the different provinces. The need for such units is in line with the proposals of the Task Team on CETCs and proposals suggested in the Charter for Human and Social Sciences.

7.3.6 Providers, programmes and curriculum

Providers of CET should be expanded to include CBOs and NGOs who provide CET programmes relevant to the context. The establishment of CETCs should consider housing CBOs and NGOs, and evaluate which programmes – formal and non-formal – should form part of its offerings. An analysis of the programmes of NGOs and CBOs must be conducted in order to conceptualise a core curricula for CET which would constitute the national emphasis of government. The curricula should be based on a development studies model which is theme-based and should reflect citizenship, democracy and social justice, as well as economic development needs of the local and the national. Community education curricula should support local people in their efforts to play constructive and positive roles in issues which affect their daily lives. This could be done through locally-sited, integrated, issue-based programmes rather than the compartmentalised, subject-based provision which are currently being offered by PALCs. The curricula, which should be available as both formal and non-formal, should take the form of a national objective-based curriculum framework, rather than unit standards. The curricula should be supported by well-designed materials available in all CETCs. Community-specific curricula should also be available to adults and youth. The community-specific curricula may differ from one context to another because they would reflect the immediate problems, issues, needs and wants of a community. Adults and youth could be encouraged to participate in community development projects in response to community issues and problems. To enable this, opportunities need to be created in collaboration with the local municipality, donors, businesses, DHET and other government departments. The community-specific curricula should also be supported by well-designed and written materials funded by government and donor funds. In addition to this, CETCs should also offer a variety of short courses as determined by the communities in which they are located.

Learning support materials (LSMs) form an important component of learning programme provision and delivery. Resources available should include:

- a range of quality curriculum materials which reflect the diversity of learning styles, needs and cultures (including languages) of the adult and youth population;
- materials which are of interest and relevance to adults and youth, and which provide the

basis of a broad, general education, and are non-sexist and non-racist;

- programme-related learning materials freely accessible to learners in the programme as well as other materials housed in the CETC;
- a variety of media and the corresponding equipment including computers, DVD and CD players, television sets, and tape recorders;
- an annual budget for the purchase of print and non-print materials as well as stationery supplies. New programmes which form part of the CET programmes should receive an allocation for the initial purchase of materials and an ongoing annual materials budget;
- an annual budget for the purchase and maintenance of equipment (including that for learners with special needs). New programmes should be allocated a budget for the initial purchase of equipment; and
- photocopying services with a budget for the copying of programme-related material.

Implications: This proposal would bring into existence core curricula which will have an impact on how qualifications in adult education have been conceptualised. Alternative qualifications will have to be designed. A curriculum development process needs to be initiated, perhaps through the envisaged National Institute for Community Education and Training and supported by centres of adult education and universities in collaboration with CBOs and NGOs. Staff in NGOs and CBOs would be more appropriate than currently employed school teachers in PALCs to teach some of these courses. This would call for a change in conditions of service of adult educators as currently defined.

7.3.7 Educator training and development

The quality of programmes is directly related to the knowledge and skills of the teaching staff. A comprehensive system for the provision of quality education must be supported by a parallel system for the provision of appropriate education for educators and organisers of community education. The following conditions could guide the development of a system for staff development:

- Educational programmes for educators and organisers of community education should be based on both the knowledge and experience of people in the field (including educators, learners and organisers), and on current research;
- The development of professional education programmes must recognise the special nature of community education. In addition to adult learning theory, specific programme content areas will need to be defined. The content should be broad-based and should include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - development of an understanding of the social context of learning;
 - varieties of methods;
 - non-formal and informal approaches to the assessment and evaluation of learning;
 - diversity of materials and curricula.

- Education for community education teaching and organising staff should be available through a variety of mechanisms including credit courses, degree and diploma programmes, workshops, study groups, practicals and in-class demonstrations and simulations by experienced adult educators;
- There should be negotiation with universities for the development of credit courses and degree programmes in CET. Universities should be encouraged to develop these programmes in consultation with the field and, as far as possible, to recruit teaching staff who have practical experience in the field of CET.

7.3.8 Research and development

There is at present only a weak base of knowledge to guide the development of programmes in CET. Over the last decade people working in the field have identified a number of areas which need to be researched. These include:

- the theory and practice of CET including the teaching of literacy;
- the relative value and appropriate uses of varying methods;
- the use of diverse resources in CET;
- deterrents to participation; and
- the impact of CET programmes on participating adults and youth.

If the necessary research is to be undertaken and widely disseminated, a system will need to be established for the initiation and co-ordination of such research. Research and development should be a national effort and funding for this should be provided by government. The DHET needs to interact with companies, government and research institutions to ensure that the specific needs for research into CET are adequately addressed.

The following process is recommended for the formation of a research and development component to serve CET nationally:

- Budgets for research in CET should reflect the long-term commitment of the national government and the corporate sector to the ongoing development of quality programming and should include the costs of both conducting and publishing the research;
- Budgets should be planned over ten year periods and budget allocations should be made known to appropriate research agencies and institutions, people working in the field, and the general public;
- The development of a comprehensive national research agenda should be ongoing and responsive to needs as they become evident in the field. Research topics should come from people working in the field in collaboration with academic researchers, not from the individual interests of researchers or funding agencies;

- The research should be conducted through a range of agencies and institutions. Both geographic and demographic factors should be considered in the selection of these agencies and institutions;
- It is recommended that people working in the field of CET participate not only in the development of a research agenda but also in carrying out the research, where they are qualified to do so;
- In addition to funding and publishing research, the national government should also take responsibility for a range of educational efforts arising out of the research. The publication of a regular journal to report on current research and development initiatives and the development of resource materials for people working in the field would help ensure the application of research findings to the provision of programmes; and
- The system of research and development should provide guidelines and support for programme evaluation.

7.3.9 Monitoring and evaluation

To ensure that CET programmes are providing a high quality education and that learners' needs are being met, there must be regular and ongoing internal monitoring and evaluation, as well as periodic external evaluation of programmes. Programme evaluations should serve the separate and distinct purposes of programme development and programme accountability.

The following framework is recommended for programme evaluation:

- all programme evaluation processes should include input from the community served by the programme;
- internal evaluations for the purpose of programme development should be conducted on an annual basis;
- programme co-ordinators/managers should be responsible for internal evaluations and should present reports of internal evaluations;
- the internal evaluation process should include teaching staff, learners, and support staff;
- the process of internal evaluations should be formative. However, it is crucial that all aspects of the programme be examined critically and that there is a real commitment to change and improvement. Evaluation procedures which are overly subjective tend to merely validate existing practice;
- external evaluations of programmes will need to be conducted for the purpose of

programme development as well as for programme accountability. It is essential that these two purposes be clearly differentiated through separate and unrelated evaluations;

- external evaluations for the purpose of programme development should be conducted every three years, or at any time if reports of internal evaluations reveal problems or weaknesses;
- external evaluations should provide a mechanism for the spread of innovative ideas and practices from one programme to others throughout the region or throughout the system;
- accountability evaluations should be based on the accepted standards of good practice. Terms and procedures for these evaluations should be developed in collaboration with the field;
- although evaluations for the purpose of programme accountability might appropriately ask that there be a learner assessment component in place, individual learner progress should not be the sole measure of programme effectiveness;
- all programme evaluation, whether external or internal, whether for the purpose of programme improvement or programme accountability, should use both subjective and objective criteria and should combine quantitative and qualitative measures; and
- the necessity for regular programme evaluation should be reflected in ongoing budget allocations for this purpose. It is recommended that the regional CET unit designate a reasonable percentage (4 to 6%) of its overall budget for programme evaluation.

7.3.10 Funding

The DHET will only be able to develop comprehensive systems for the delivery of CET if adequate levels of funding are committed specifically for this purpose. Within each province, it will be necessary for the body which has the designated responsibility for CET to commit funds in proportion to the assessed need for programming. Funding allocations must be sufficient to cover all the costs of establishing and maintaining organisational and support structures as well as all the costs associated with establishing, maintaining, and expanding CET programmes. National and local responsibility for CET must be reflected in long-term, stable funding.

The following conditions should govern CET funding policy:

- The DHET must include CET as a core part of their long-range planning of expenditures;
- The DHET budgets for CET should be established separately from other budget areas and should be made known to the public;

- CET budgets should be developed by the DHET, and organising and teaching staff should be informed of the local budget allocations and breakdowns;
- CET units should work with appropriate provincial and national ministries or departments and the DHET to develop budgets for the provision of teaching, income support, transportation allowances, and quality day-care facilities for learners enrolled in CET programmes;
- The DHET budget projections for CET should provide for significant annual increases in expenditures over at least the first ten years of a strategy for CET provision and delivery. When a system for CET education provision is well established, budgets should reflect a continuing commitment which parallels commitments to all other areas of education;
- The DHET budgets for ABET should be based on a realistic costing of all the elements of a high quality educational service. Salary estimates for educators, co-ordinators, specialists, and support staff should be in line with equivalent positions in all other areas of education and, like all other areas, salary scales should conform to qualifications and experience of personnel. Estimates for resources and facilities should be based on equivalent assessments for expenditures in all other areas of education; and
- Attempts should be made to estimate reasonable and standardised unit costs per learner at the various levels of CET.

Funding formulae

Funding of ABET should be sourced from government, donors, the business sector, NSF and SETAs. The DHET should facilitate funding for CET from:

- Surplus funds available from the NSF;
- SETAs and their discretionary fund;
- Other government departments including the local municipality; and
- Donors (local business and international donors).

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Appendix A: Proshika – Community Literacy Programme

Proshika: Adult literacy for sustainable development

Proshika which is currently working in more than half the rural villages in Bangladesh. 'Proshika' is an acronym of the Bangla (Bengali) for *training*, education and *action*. In describing itself as a 'centre for human development', Proshika is arguing, in effect, that development (as distinct from disaster relief) must be people-driven if it is to be people-centred. It must also be sustainable in the sense that it is the kind of development that ordinary people want and can sustain for themselves and for future generations (see Eade, 1997). It is worth emphasising that this kind of people-centredness is about enabling ordinary people to take for themselves some degree of power in order to change the objective conditions of their social, cultural and material reality in ways which serve their own collective interests. This is quite different from the introspective and self-preoccupied 'person-centredness' that is characteristic of certain 'soft' variations of the humanistic tradition in Western adult and community education. In this sense, there is a distinction to be made between the politicised and collective notion of 'the people' and the sanitised and individualised notion of 'the person'.

It is these ordinary people, most of whom live in poor villages or urban slums and shanty towns, who must be the key resources for change if they are to be the beneficiaries of change. They must learn to rely on themselves and their own capacity for collective learning and social action to make the sort of changes that are in their interests. No one else will do this for them. In other words, people-centredness is a philosophy which embodies simultaneously the vision of a better world and a strategy for changing the world. Thus, Proshika defines the basic goal of all its educational work as:

To eliminate illiteracy by ensuring children's schooling at primary level and by enhancing adult education to splice the new literates into the process of sustainable development and thus to engage them in a continuous process of learning.

Literacy must therefore be functional in the proper, non-reductionist sense if it is to be 'empowering', i.e. by enabling ordinary people to take more control over their lives in the day-to-day world as it really is. For example, Proshika defines what it calls 'actual literacy' as 'one's proven capability to make use of one's education consciously for social, economic and human development'. In other words, literacy must be made 'meaningful' to people in terms of their enhanced capacity to make their lives better in an objective way. This can only happen if education helps people to act together by learning to understand the linkage between the micro and the macro, the personal and the political. This linkage is demonstrated in the way in which Proshika makes quite explicit the connections between the

literacy process, social consciousness, political organisation and material change: 'literacy-awareness-independence-organisation- sustainable development'. Throughout all the accounts of Proshika's work there is, then, a conscious and consistent attempt to relate practical skills development to political emancipation, to connect literacy to what Paulo Freire calls 'conscientization', and to turn learning into social action.

This kind of approach to literacy can help people escape both the material reality of poverty and what Freire describes as the 'culture of silence', i.e. the political and cultural exclusion and powerlessness:

Literacy will make the people ... conscious and self-reliant; and help them to consolidate themselves within organisations and proceed steadily and firmly towards development and empowerment and towards realising their fundamental rights.

Official government figures indicate steady progress, with the literacy rate for the adult population rising from 46 per cent in 1997 to 51 per cent in 1998 and 56 per cent in 1999 (personal communication between authors). But the harsh reality is that Bangladesh's population is still growing. What this means, in effect, is that although the national literacy rate is increasing, so is the total number of illiterate people. The struggle against illiteracy must therefore go on. This is the background to Proshika's Universal Education Programme, which is based on the following propositions:

- Education is the prerequisite for any development;
- Only education can make development sustainable;
- Education is the tool for the all-out emancipation of the poor;
- Learning is an endless process, coterminous only with an individual's life.

Proshika puts this programme into action by carrying its work into four different educational sites: formal schooling (supporting children in primary school), non-formal primary education (providing alternative community-based education for the 60 per cent of children who have either dropped out of school or never got into it), adult literacy and post-literacy work (developing literacy programmes geared specifically to the interests of the poor and the goal of sustainable development) and, finally, village study circles (making available and accessible at the village level the educational resources needed to acquire 'really useful knowledge in its widest sense').

(Taken from Crowther, Hamilton & Tett, 2001)

Appendix B

A Bill of Rights for the Adult Learner [and Youth]

A democratic nation is made possible through the efforts of a knowledgeable populace actively committed to the general welfare and alert to the opportunities for personal growth and development. Essential for realizing this commitment is the availability of a wide variety of adult and continuing education opportunities. The institutions and agencies of a democratic society will strive to assure that the following rights are possible by all who have adult responsibilities and who seek to learn in any setting. The right to learn regardless of age, gender, colour, ethnic or linguistic background, marital status, the presence of dependants, disability, or financial circumstances:

- *The right of equal opportunity for access to relevant learning opportunities throughout life.*
- *The right to educational leave from employment for general, as well as vocational or professional, education.*
- *The right to financial aid and educational services at levels comparable to those provided for younger or full-time learners.*
- *The right to encouragement and support in learning subject matter that the learner believes will lead to growth and self-actualisation.*
- *The right to a learning environment suitable for adults that includes appropriate instructional materials, media and facilities.*
- *The right to have relevant prior learning evaluated and, when appropriate, recognised for academic credit toward a degree or credential.*
- *The right to participate or be appropriately represented in planning or selecting learning activities in which the learner is engaged.*
- *The right to be taught by qualified and competent instructors who possess appropriate subject-matter qualifications, as well as knowledge and skills relating to the instructional needs of adults.*
- *The right to academic support resources, including instructional technology, that can make self-directed learning or distance learning possible.*
- *The right to dependent care and related structures of social support.*
- *The right to individualised information and guidance leading towards further study.*

(Coalition of Adult Education Organisations, Adult Learning, 3(4), 1991:106)