

HESA Quarterly



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Higher Education South Africa (HESA)
Building 3, UNISA Sunnyside Campus,
Rissik Street, Sunnyside, Pretoria

Contributions may be sent to Ms 'Mateboho Green at:
HESAQuarterly@hesa.org.za

CEO's Message

It is with pleasure that we bring you the inaugural issue of *HESA Quarterly*, an e-bulletin of Higher Education South Africa (HESA).

We aim to provide you with information on key activities of HESA --- we reflect on policy issues to ensure that the voice of HESA is heard in South African policy debates. At the same time, we alert you to current projects and upcoming initiatives, such as the national Graduates Destination Surveys (GDSs), a planned colloquium to address funding challenges facing our universities, the funding boost to the National Benchmark Tests (NBTs) project, and also update you more generally on other programmes, including progress we are making in the fight against HIV & AIDS both within the university sector and in the Further Education and Training (FET) college sector.

In light of the convening power of HESA, we also include information on our workshops, colloquia, conferences, seminars, and so on. Following on the heels of the successful 3rd HESA Biennial Research and Innovation Conference on 2 and 3 April 2014, this edition naturally gives you a glimpse of the conference deliberations and outcomes, pending the completion of a more comprehensive report that we will issue in due course.

We also share with you our plans to strengthen ties with sister organisations in other parts of the world. For this edition specifically, we reflect on our emerging partnership with the German Rectors' Forum and the potential that such a partnership holds for HESA and our own university sector in South Africa.

HESA has many exciting plans for 2014 and beyond, so we hope that you will keep reading our *HESA Quarterly* and visiting our website regularly. We invite you to contact us with your news and information, and with suggestions for other topics to be explored.

We hope you find *HESA Quarterly* of interest and welcome your feedback.

Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele
Chief Executive Officer, HESA



Dr Max Price appointed Interim HESA Chair



Dr Max Price, Deputy Chairperson of HESA, was appointed Interim Chairperson on 25 March 2014. This decision, taken at the first meeting in 2014 of the HESA Board of Directors, followed Dr Saleem Badat's decision to step down as Chair and his recent resignation as Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University (RU). According to HESA CEO Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele, a firm appointment would be made by the Board at the scheduled Annual General Meeting in July 2014.

Expressing his regret at Dr Badat's departure, Dr Mabelebele said: "On behalf of HESA, I would like to express our gratitude to Dr Badat for the sterling contribution he made to the work of HESA over the years. Undoubtedly, he contributed immensely to the policy reforms in our higher education system. Equally, HESA is pleased to welcome a person of Dr Max Price's calibre as its Interim Chairperson. We look forward to working with him to further advance the interests of our higher education system as a whole", Dr Mabelebele stated.

About Dr Max Price

Dr Max Price has been Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town (UCT) since July 2008, during which time he was instrumental in elevating the institution's status to that of a leading university in Africa and a formidable global player in higher education. Within HESA, he has been serving his second term as Vice-Chairperson of the Board since January 2012.

From 1996 to 2006, Dr Price served as Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). As dean and a member of the senior executive team at Wits, he spearheaded a series of transformation initiatives, including an internal reconciliation commission which challenged the faculty to come to terms with its role under apartheid. He established a new graduate, entry-level medical degree, and academic programmes in rural health, bioethics, sports medicine, emergency medicine, and biomedical sciences. He also founded South Africa's first university-owned private teaching hospital, the first university research company, and raised over R130 million for new initiatives in the Faculty of Health Sciences. In addition, he oversaw major construction and relocation projects associated with the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Apart from numerous other professional responsibilities, Dr Price was previously Chairperson of the National Committee of Medical Deans and served for 10 years as a member of the Medical and Dental Professions Board of South Africa. He holds an MB BCh degree from Wits (1979), a BA (Hons) PPE (Oxon 1983), an MSc in Community Health from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and a Diploma in Occupational Health from Wits.

Dr Price has published extensively in local and international refereed journals and has written over 100 articles and academic conference papers on a range of topics, including on health systems research, the political economy of health, health economics and financing, privatisation and medical aid schemes, rural health services, computer-simulation modelling of health systems, medical education, and human resources for health.

Dr Price's professional career has included clinical work in hospitals and rural primary healthcare. He was a Research Fellow in Health Economics at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (1986-87), a Senior Researcher and then Director of the Centre for Health Policy at Wits, and a visiting Takemi Fellow in International Health at the Harvard School of Public Health in the United States (1994-95).

Prior to his appointment as Vice-Chancellor, he worked for two years as an independent consultant in the fields of public health, health policy, medical education, and human resources for health planning.



Dr Max Price: Interim HESA Chairperson until a firm appointment is made in July 2014

HESA to embark on a national Graduate Destination Survey (GDS)

During 2014, HESA will embark on a national Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) in collaboration with the Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC). Primarily, the study will seek to ascertain the employability of graduates completing their studies within the South African university system and, in this context, also determine the existing pathways from higher education into the labour market. Sponsored by the Education, Training and Development Practices –Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP-SETA), the study will be conducted across the entire university system.

It is also aimed to establish:

- the value of work placement and available internships for university graduates;
- the inter-regional migration of skilled graduates in South Africa; and
- possibly, also explore the qualitative attributes of graduates exiting the university system.

This project has been crafted on and is an extension of a previous study completed by the CHEC, whose aim it was to investigate the destination of graduates from Western Cape-based universities. In 2012, the CHEC undertook a tracer survey in order to determine where 2010 cohort graduates from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), the University of Cape Town (UCT), Stellenbosch University (SU), and the University of the Western Cape (UWC) ended up. The study surveyed employment/unemployment status two years after graduation.

Globally, GDSs are seen as important planning tools in higher education. According to the CHEC, GDSs in higher education can contribute significantly to institutional processes of system-steering, planning, and curriculum development. For several reasons, and from a general data-gathering and statistical point of view, GDSs are important tools for institutional planners, university executives, deans and others in higher education; and, most importantly, they show the extent of graduate unemployment per institution, province/region, and nationally.

In addition, a GDS provides a formidable body of higher education data, significantly adding to the more systems-oriented insights made available by the Higher Education Information Management System (HEMIS) data, which focus largely on macro-level enrolment and graduation data, as well as 'qualification level' and 'field of study' indicators.

This project, for which HESA has raised funding of some R3 million, will be rolled out in 2014.



GDSs help to assess the employability of graduates exiting the South African university system and also the existing pathways into the labour market

Funding-related protests call for urgent deliberations

In response to the funding challenges experienced by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), HESA intends to organise a colloquium by mid-year to discuss the nature, scale and scope of the problem, and try to collectively find sustainable solutions. Recognising that the NSFAS challenges cannot be dealt with by the aid scheme alone, the envisaged colloquium will involve stakeholders from the Ministry and Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the National Treasury, the Council on Higher Education (CHE), the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training, and the South African Students Union (SASU).

The colloquium is set to:

- analyse and understand NSFAS-related funding challenges and their implications for universities in the short, medium and long-term;
- explore various options, and make a commitment to finding solutions to the problems at hand;
- secure consensus on a set of interventions to be pursued in addressing NSFAS-related funding challenges; and
- work towards developing an accord between the various stakeholders in pursuit of the long-term goal of a sustainable NSFAS.

HESA hopes that such a meeting will yield an agreement on a set of short, medium and long-term interventions to address the NSFAS challenges. Says CEO Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele: "There should be a deliberate intention to concentrate on the achievable, and to convert outcomes into commitments for enduring solutions." The envisaged colloquium, dates of which will be announced shortly, is set to attract some 100 participants.



Recognising that funding challenges concern numerous stakeholders, officials from the DHET, the National Treasury, the CHE, the South African Students Union and others will participate in the planned colloquium

Standard Bank South Africa injects R5.7 million into NBTs

Since the implementation in 2005 of National Benchmark Tests (NBTs) by HESA, in collaboration with the University of Cape Town (UCT)'s Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED), NBTs have been assisting universities in identifying the educational needs of first-time, entry-level students with a view to providing support where required.

UCT and Standard Bank of South Africa have entered into a strategic partnership to subsidise NBTs and render them accessible to more students, to significantly improve (at a national level) the effectiveness of entry-level teaching and learning in higher education, and to increase information dissemination on NBTs to various stakeholders and target groups. Standard Bank South Africa will invest R5.7 million in the project during 2014.

This partnership was launched at a ceremony held in Pretoria on 24 March 2014, attended by the Chairperson and CEO of HESA, Dr Saleem Badat and Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele, respectively, a representative from Standard Bank South Africa, and UCT Vice-Chancellor, Dr Max Price.

The NBT partnership between Standard Bank South Africa and UCT comes at a very opportune time. It will allow HESA and the whole university sector to expand NBTs to be taken by a larger number of students, thereby enabling universities to construct curricula and other related interventions to improve students' academic and quantitative literacy and mathematical proficiency.



Dr Saleem Badat, then HESA Chairperson, co-hosted the launch of this funding partnership with UCT Vice-Chancellor, Dr Max Price

As part of his opening remarks, Dr Badat noted: "The NBT project was commissioned by HESA in 2005 to assess the academic readiness of first-year university students in core domains relevant to student progress and success in higher education (HE). The aim was that this information could be used to inform the nature of foundation/extended courses for those students who are deemed to require more time to complete their studies."

NBTs attempt to measure the underlying knowledge, skills and cognitive abilities that students will need to complete higher education and, by so doing, provide feedback in two areas: a) on schooling, about the kinds of preparation that will be needed; and b) on higher education, about the curricula that are likely to be appropriate.

The tests are conducted in three core areas: Academic Literacy, Quantitative Literacy, and Mathematics. The first two tests are collapsed into one: AQL, the academic and quantitative literacy test, which all applicants have to write. The third test: MAT, the mathematics test, is written by students applying for programmes in Commerce, Health Sciences, Engineering, and Science.

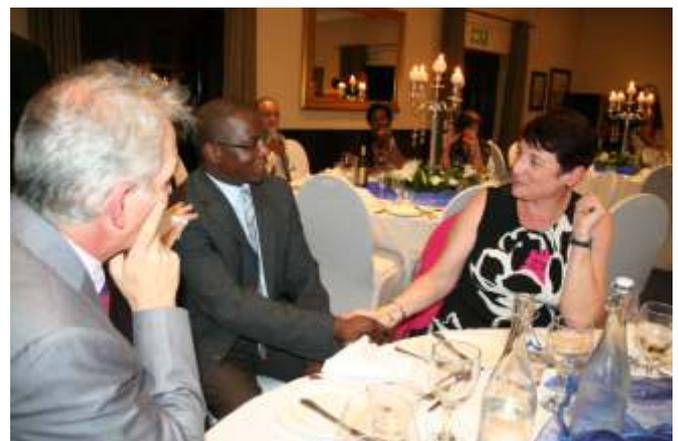
Rationale for the NBT project

It is generally acknowledged that South Africa's education system is in trouble. Historically, the lightning rod for this has been matric (Grade 12) which, until recently, has been the only externally moderated national examination in the South African education system, now joined by national assessments at key points lower in the system. These reveal that there are serious problems at all levels of schooling.

This dismal level of performance continues into higher education and creates two interlinked imperatives for this sector. The first is to identify students from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The second is the need to provide supportive learning opportunities in higher education that will enable all students to gain the requisite academic foundation in order to succeed in advanced studies.

NBTs are key instruments in assisting the higher education sector to fulfil these responsibilities.

(This is a condensed version of an article written by Mr Robert Prince, Director of CETAP in the CHED at the University of Cape Town.)



From left, Dr Max Price, UCT's Vice-Chancellor and Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele, HESA's CEO in conversation with Standard Bank South Africa's Head of Group Inclusion Strategies, Ms Wendy Orr (Photo by KJB Productions)

Colloquium of Education Deans gets underway in May 2014

The Education Deans' Forum colloquium will take place on 20 May 2014 at the Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre on the East Rand, Gauteng. The theme of this event is *Learning in and for Practice: The Role of Teaching Experience in Initial Teacher Education*.

The overall purpose of the colloquium is to bring together teacher/educators for a structured dialogue on teaching practice as a key component of teacher-education qualifications, for an exchange of ideas and experiences in order to build a shared, local knowledge base and to promote 'best practice'. It is aimed at deans of faculties of education, teacher/educators, student teachers, and other relevant stakeholders.

Teaching practice is a required component of all teacher-education programmes as set out in both the 'Minimum Requirements for Teacher-Education Qualifications' and the 'Integrated Strategic Plan for Teacher-Education and Development'.

OBJECTIVES:

- identify strategic challenges for the teaching-experience component of BEd (Bachelor of Education) and the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE);
- share innovative practices that address these challenges;
- identify principles for sustainable school-university partnerships; and
- enhance the status of teaching practice through rigorous collegial engagement.



The Education Deans' Forum has therefore identified this as an issue that warrants structured discussion in the form of a colloquium to which all institutions will be invited. The colloquium offers an opportunity for structured dialogue between all relevant institutions about the conceptualisation and implementation of teaching practice, to build a knowledge base in order to address common challenges, and to determine 'what works' in preparing teachers for the specific needs of the South African situation.

In keeping with the spirit of HESA's 'communities of practice', the Education Deans' Forum brings together relevant role players from member institutions to share their knowledge and experiences.

HESA pleads for a three-year VAT freeze on electronic library services to universities

Following the National Treasury's announcement and invitation for public comment on the new 'Electronic Services Regulations' on 31 January 2014, HESA responded on 20 February and acknowledged government's rationale for this policy development. In essence, electronic services regulations require foreign commercial suppliers of electronic services to register for value added tax (VAT) in South Africa. Previously, foreign e-commerce suppliers were not required to pay VAT, thus retaining a 14% competitive advantage over their local counterparts who are subject to VAT.

The services to which the regulations will apply include educational services, information systems (including maintenance services), and subscription services that are supplied electronically as exports to recipients in South Africa and for which payment is transacted through a registered bank in the country. Examples of educational services listed in the regulations are distance teaching programmes, educational webcasts, internet-based courses, and internet-based educational programmes or webinars. Maintenance services refer to technical support as it pertains to the development and maintenance of blogs, databases, and information system services or websites.

Regulations detrimental to universities

On behalf of its constituency of 23 public universities, HESA expressed concern that the 'Electronic Services Regulations' will have a detrimental financial impact on public universities, especially on the services rendered by libraries within the various higher education institutions (HEIs). "HESA believes that access to affordable and sustainable knowledge resources for staff and students is required for higher education to succeed in developing an equitable, diverse human-resource base on which to build a knowledge-based economy", the submission stated. "A lack of access to such knowledge resources impacts negatively on productivity, quality of education and research outputs and, ultimately, global competitiveness."

"It should be noted that the 20% devaluation of the Rand in 2013, and the imposition of 14% VAT on all library holdings by the National Treasury in 2014, will result in an increase of more than 30% in the current costs of library holdings. Together, these costs are rendering our central library resources unaffordable. Simultaneously, it deepens the existing inequities within our higher education system. HESA believes that the situation is untenable and is no longer financially viable for public universities, especially for our staff and students who bear the brunt of declining access to knowledge resources."

Country licensing a HESA-proposed solution

HESA, therefore, lobbied that a three-year moratorium (effective 2014-2016) be placed on the imposition of the VAT requirement for library services rendered by public universities in South Africa.

"We believe that this window period will allow HESA to continue with necessary engagements with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and other relevant stakeholders to adopt the model of a country license for the purchase of library holdings at all public universities. This, in a sense, will address the issue of affordability of scholarly journals and books for the higher education sector. Furthermore, the moratorium will allow public universities to plan and adjust library budget provisions for the coming years, well in advance."

Even though the National Treasury has since postponed the effective date for implementation of the Regulations to 1 June 2014 in order to allow businesses sufficient time to get their systems in place, HESA continues to lobby the relevant authorities for a three-year freeze of this policy in respect of university libraries.

Watch this space for updates.

HESA's transformation project takes root



The transformation agenda has been gathering momentum since the Cape Town workshop in December 2012 and the UFS-hosted colloquium (above) in May 2013

In the quest to advance transformation as a moral and legal imperative in higher education, HESA is looking to further deepen discussions within the sector during 2014.

Towards this end, stakeholders can look forward to a number of seminal activities from mid-2014 to mid-2015.

Common Campaign Days project

At its sitting on 22 October 2013, the HESA Board noted and approved a proposal in support of the 'Common Campaign Days' project, through which HESA (via its Transformation Strategy Group) is seeking to align itself with the nation in celebrating 20 years of freedom and democracy. This will be occasion for the higher education sector to reflect on: (a) how South Africa's freedom and democracy was achieved, (b) progress made in the past 20 years, and (c) how South Africans should work together in order to implement the government's 'Vision 2030'.

Towards this end, HESA is mobilising all member institutions to rally behind the theme '20 Years of Freedom and Democracy' and embark on a series of celebratory activities and common campaign days between 27 April and 18 July 2014. Regional co-operation among HEIs is encouraged.

Regional workshops

Now that funding has been secured, HESA is developing a series of projects during the course of 2014, key among which are regional workshops focusing on one particular area in the mission statement of universities, namely Teaching and Learning.

The overall strategic objective of these workshops will be to emphasise the need for transformation and to interrogate the challenges (HEIs) are faced with in teaching and learning, with specific reference to mathematics and African languages, and to assess the interventions and programmes being developed by HEIs to encourage collaboration and co-operation, as well as to see what can be successfully implemented elsewhere.

These workshops will represent other milestones since HESA kick-started the transformation dialogue in the sector with a workshop of transformation managers in December 2012. This was followed by a transformation colloquium, held at the University of the Free State (UFS) in early May 2013, further deepening discussions on this topic.

In the quest to create a climate of honest and open debate, leading to greater understanding, social cohesion and mutuality within HEIs, HESA will conduct research aimed at developing a template or framework for integrated transformation plans across the sector.

HESA is hoping that this research project (conceptualised by the HESA Transformation Task Team and to be conducted during 2014) could culminate in a Transformation Barometer for the higher education sector.

Transformation conference

HESA's on-going work in higher education transformation is expected to culminate in the first fully-fledged academic conference on transformation in 2015. Although the dates are yet to be finalised, planning is underway to have this event early in 2015. Further details in this regard will be shared shortly.

Update on policy developments

Following the publication in December 2012 of the *Higher Education and Training Laws Amendment Act* and, subsequently, the draft 'Reporting Regulations for Public Universities', a HESA delegation met with the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, in April 2013 to raise concerns about the two policy documents. The Minister expressed a willingness to engage with the higher education sector in an effort to come to an amicable resolution of these matters. As a result of these engagements, two HESA-DHET joint task teams were established to address these concerns.

Higher Education and Training Laws Amendment Act

The joint task team on the 'Review of the Higher Education Act' met in November 2013, during which the terms of reference, the *modus operandi*, and project time frames were agreed upon. Among other matters, the joint task team's mandate was to:

- review the Higher Education Act for inconsistencies and/or contradictions and omissions;
- consider the debates and issues around institutional autonomy, public accountability, and co-operative governance, and assess whether these have been adequately balanced/covered in the Act;
- consider appropriate measures and requirements related to the independent assessment, administration and post-administration contexts of higher education institutions (HEIs);
- make recommendations on unresolved aspects related to the transitional arrangements as indicated in the Act (including Section 74 which deals with the dissolution of the Committee of University Principals, the Matriculation Board, and the Committee of Technikon Principals); and
- review all the subordinate legislation and notices under this Act.

HESA's representatives and nominees to the Joint Task Team were Prof Niek Grove, Mr Hugh Amoore and Prof Divya Singh, all members of HESA's Legal Advisory Committee, Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele (HESA CEO), and Ms Nasima Badsha in her capacity as a HESA Research Fellow.

At the end of March 2014, HESA submitted comprehensive commentary on the provisions of the Act which are of particular concern to the higher education sector. The next joint HESA-DHET Task Team meeting was scheduled for April 2014, at which the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) would provide feedback to HESA and advise on the way forward. The joint task team would endeavour to complete its work by the end of 2014.

Draft Reporting Regulations for Public Higher Education Institutions

With regard to the draft 'Reporting Regulations for Public Universities', HESA discussed the matter with the Minister in April 2013, and an agreement was reached to delay the finalisation of the regulations until further engagements with the sector on specific areas of concern were concluded. Via the joint HESA-DHET task team, extensive consultations were conducted with relevant structures within HESA, namely the Funding Strategy Group, the Legal Advisory Committee, and the Finance Executives' Forum. These culminated in a written HESA response to the draft regulations, submitted to the DHET in December 2013.

HESA envisaged that the DHET would heed the inputs from the higher education sector in its revision of the draft regulations which, it was anticipated, would be published as a final policy document during the first quarter of 2014. HESA's representatives to the joint task team on the draft reporting regulations were Dr Saleem Badat, then HESA Chairperson of the Funding Strategy Group, Prof Niek Grove, Chairperson of HESA's Legal Advisory Committee, and Prof Enrico Uliana, Chairperson of the Finance Executives' Forum.



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HESA Board welcomes the Ministerial Funding Review Committee Report

The HESA Board of Directors has welcomed the Report of the 'Ministerial Committee for the Review of the Funding of Universities' released in February 2014. The Board was particularly pleased to note that the Report makes a set of detailed recommendations, amongst others, in the following areas:

- level of funding of higher education in South Africa;
- enrolment planning, and over and under-enrolment;
- accountability;
- architecture of the funding framework;
- differentiation of the university system and funding implications;
- historically disadvantaged institutions;
- teaching and learning (including teaching input grants, teaching output grants, distance education/open and distance learning);
- research and innovation;
- work-integrated learning and community engagement; and
- university development and efficiency improvements.

“Although HESA is strongly supportive of the overall direction of the Report, it is our view that these recommendations will have to be fully discussed and prioritised from the perspectives of affordability and overall short, medium and long-term impact on the higher education sector and individual institutions, before a funding policy is developed. To this end, we welcome your decision to establish both the technical team and reference group to model the funding review recommendations in the Report. We have appointed ... Dr Mvuyo Tom (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Fort Hare) and Prof Ahmed Bawa (Vice-Chancellor of the Durban University of Technology) to serve on the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) reference group.”

“Proceeding from the recommendation of the Review Committee that 'any future substantive changes to the funding framework should follow the appropriate routes of consultation as indicated in Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Act (No 101 of 1997, as amended) before any changes to the funding framework are effected', HESA remains ready to engage with the envisaged draft funding policy framework once developed.”



HESA-German Rectors' Forum pact being given effect

A comprehensive co-operation agreement between Higher Education South Africa (HESA) and the German Rectors' Forum was signed in Berlin on 17 September 2013. At the signing ceremony, HESA was represented by Prof Ahmed C Bawa, Chairperson of HESA at the time, and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele. The agreement focuses on research and academic collaboration between the higher education sectors in Germany and South Africa.

Following this event, representatives from both sides held an inaugural meeting in Pretoria on 3 April 2014 to flesh out the modalities for future collaboration. Representing HESA was Prof Ahmed C Bawa; Prof Danie Visser, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, University of Cape Town (UCT); Prof Thoko Mayekiso, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU); and HESA CEO Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele. The German Rectors' Forum was represented by Prof Arnold van Zyl, Rector of Technische Universität, Chemnitz; Prof Bernd Siebenhüner, Vice-President, University of Oldenburg; and Dr Thomas Bühm, Head of Section: Africa and the Middle East, German Rectors' Forum. Also in attendance was Ms Maja Clausen from the German Embassy in Pretoria.

South Africa and Germany are already collaborating in a wide variety of research projects in disciplines such as engineering, the geosciences, health economics, chemistry, and biotechnology. It was decided that data would be gathered on on-going South African-German collaborative research projects. This data would then be analysed and mapped in order to determine strategic priorities for both countries. Once the key areas for research collaboration in terms of the co-operation agreement have been identified and agreed upon, contact between researchers from both countries will be facilitated.

According to Dr Mabelebele, the German university system is one of the most productive globally in terms of research output: “The system produces just in excess of 26 000 PhDs a year in comparison to South Africa's paltry output of 1 500.” He lauds Germany as home to some of the best universities in the world, while the country also boasts a very strong vocational education system. “We, therefore, hope this agreement will enable us to strengthen the research and innovation capability of our own higher education system.”

Universities challenged to boost South Africa's R&I capacity

Minister in the Presidency and Co-Chairperson of the National Planning Commission (NPC), Mr Trevor Manuel, argues that South Africa's university system needs to engage with the country's research and innovation (R&I) agenda and provide creative solutions to boost R&I capability.

Delivering a keynote address at HESA's 3rd Biennial Conference on Research and Innovation at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) on 2 April 2014, Minister Manuel noted that the celebration of 20 years of democracy provides a unique opportunity for the higher education sector to "assess where we are and what we are capable of becoming". He added that the Preamble to South Africa's Constitution is a good place to start such a journey, as "it defines our purpose and what we should do --- to heal the divisions of the past, improve the quality of life of all citizens, free the potential of each person, and build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations".

Mr Manuel argued that it is not possible to lift people out of poverty (both absolute poverty and relative deprivation) without vastly expanding the economy, and to carefully programme and monitor this expansion in order to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of proceeds. One of the most fundamental questions that universities need to ask revolves around what South Africa needs to do differently in order to enhance growth and to boost the country's skills capacity. He noted that "150 years ago, gold gave us momentum for economic development. That commodity is now exhausted. We have platinum; but without developing it beyond the metal [raw material] state there is very little demand for it. We might identify the gas under the Karoo as a means; but we need skills to translate that into economic capability. We need skills, knowledge, and [the] integration [of both] to grow".

HESA has enormous responsibility

Minister Manuel went on to state that HESA has an enormous responsibility to critically appraise South Africa's skills situation --- both its quantity and limitations. "Why do our municipalities show a skills deficit in engineering? Why do we as a nation lack skills in welding, locating and digging boreholes, and maintaining power stations? How do we deal with being a water-scarce country? What happens upstream, in building society? We need teachers, people who equip us with the most basic of skills; researchers and innovators who occupy places in universities and industry." He added that it was HESA's responsibility, located in that value chain, "to produce skills for research, innovation and transformation, upstream and downstream of where we are [now]".

The NDP creates a context within which all of these questions should be answered, Mr Manuel said. "It is also an invitation to get involved and to create a 'hard-think' on the role of the schooling system, [establishing] a sector underpinned by strong foundations".



Mr Trevor Manuel: "HESA is best placed to conduct studies and "be bold in explaining where we are. How far need we to push up? Do we know the boundaries? It is fundamentally important to raise the bar"

Universities challenged to boost South Africa's R&I capacity *(continued)*

Conceding that the targets set by the NDP were quite ambitious, the Minister argued that the current 17% higher education participation rate is too low, hence the quest to raise it by 30% to 1.62 million in 2030. Further defending the NDP targets, the Minister pointed out that in developing the Plan, government had employed “the brains of distinguished academics who think about life differently”. He added that the NDP was challenging universities to look beyond the enrolment headcount, and also introspect on drop-out and failure rates.

“Where do you start when people do not hang around the universities and are quick to find work? How do we curb the culture of instant gratification and develop one where graduates return for a second degree? HESA needs to investigate this phenomenon.”

Citing China's growth and the United States' performance in R&D spending and research output (distributing facts and figures on a sheet of factoids), Mr Manuel acknowledged that “many countries have become better and we have not We, therefore, need to ask ourselves [some] tough questions”. The Minister said HESA was best placed to conduct studies and “be bold in explaining where we are. How far [do we] need ... [to] push up? Do we know the boundaries? It is fundamentally important to raise the bar.”

The factoids distributed by the Minister intrigued conference delegates and got them talking. In response to his comparison of South Africa and the US, one of the delegates said the United States' R&I output was commensurate with that country's tax base and the government's investment in those areas.

The NDP at a glance

As a road map for addressing some of the challenges enumerated in the NDP, HESA CEO Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele noted that the Plan identified higher education and science and technology as critical drivers for national development.

Towards this end, the NDP had identified a set of proposals and targets for higher education, including to:

- increase the percentage of academic staff with a PhD from the current 34% to 75% by 2030;
- improve the quality of teaching and learning --- lecturers should be good teachers too!
- increase the participation rate in higher education institutions (HEIs) so that total enrolments reach 1.62 million by 2030;
- increase the throughput rate at HEIs to more than 75% (or the graduation rate by more than 25%);
- increase the number of post-graduate students to 25% of total enrolments by 2030;
- produce more than 100 doctoral graduates per million of the total population by 2030; and
- double the number of science students graduating, and increase the number of women and black post-graduates.

It was against this background that the 2014 R&I conference had chosen the NDP as a focal point to explore the extent to which the higher education sector could contribute to the implementation of the priorities identified.



Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele, HESA CEO: “We need to translate the national research and innovation priorities into actionable initiatives within the current context of funding and other constraints”

Universities challenged to boost South Africa's R&I capacity (continued)

Broadly speaking, Dr Mabelebele said the conference sought to discuss better ways of translating national R&I priorities into actionable initiatives within the current context of funding and other constraints. More specifically, the conference sought to:

- provide a platform for HEIs, government, industry and civil society to engage on challenges and factors impacting on the R&I performance of the higher education sector;
- strengthen practical collaboration between HEIs, government, industry and civil society on R&I matters;
- bring renewed awareness of, and commitment to, addressing the challenges facing universities in relation to R&I in South Africa; and
- agree on a set of actions and commitments to be implemented collectively and severally by government, HEIs and industry with a view to realising the R&D priorities of South Africa.

The 110 conference delegates comprised representatives from most of HESA's academic membership base, including six vice-chancellors, visiting scholars from two universities in Europe, top policy-makers from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST), representatives from the Council on Higher Education (CHE), and the business sector, including SASOL and First Rand. The science and research sector was represented by organisations such as the Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA), the National Research Foundation (NRF), the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), and the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf).



"We need to develop substantial capacity for innovations fit for the 21st century", says Prof Thandwa Mthembu, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the Central University of Technology (CUT) and former Chairperson of HESA's Research & Innovation Strategy Group. "Research outputs in future will be judged by how they enable South Africa to improve the economy and ... quality of life"



Delegates at the 3rd HESA Biennial Conference comprised academics from most of HESA's member universities, visiting scholars from two European universities, top policy-makers from the Departments of Higher Education and Training and Science & Technology, representatives of science, research and higher education councils as well as the business sector

NDP a means towards government, university and business collaboration on research and innovation



Dr Sizwe Nxasana: "Universities must do more to commercialise the innovations emerging from on-going research"

What South Africa's private sector spends on innovation is grossly under-reported. This is according to FirstRand CEO, Dr Sizwe Nxasana, a guest speaker at a gala dinner on day one of HESA's 3rd Biennial Research and Innovation Conference on 2 April 2014. Dr Nxasana said the theme of the 2014 conference highlighted the importance of collaboration between higher education, big business and government towards the realisation of the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP).

Dr Nxasana noted that First National Bank (FNB), a subsidiary of FirstRand, had in the past five years identified and patented no less than 2 500 innovations within its own banking environment. As an example of strategic innovation, he cited First Rand's recent departure from limiting their human resource intake to accountants only. "We broadened our scope to include young graduates from an array of social disciplines. By mixing people, not just from different academic backgrounds but also from divergent geographical regions, we recreated our own DNA." This decision, combined with a flatter organisational structure, and instilling a problem-solving culture into human resources, had paid off handsomely.

Dr Nxasana went on to say that such results were evident in FirstRand's current ability to invent banking solutions that responded to societal needs. "Our innovation capability derived directly from listening to these divergent perspectives." That, according to him, was how FNB's card-less banking solution (among many others) was born. "These innovations have translated into R3 billion worth of products, all now commercialised and deployed in the market."

But he noted that notwithstanding the significant private sector spending on innovation, this was hardly reported in gross domestic product (GDP) terms. For instance, as CEO of

FirstRand he had never had occasion to interact with the National Research Foundation (NRF), a key player and stakeholder in research and innovation. "I, therefore, often wonder where the numbers come from that get bandied about."

Proper eco-system needed to enhance entrepreneurship and innovation

Acknowledging the role being played by universities, Dr Nxasana observed that the degree of research output had increased in the past couple of years, and this indicated progress. "However, a huge effort is needed to convert the research output of universities and other tertiary institutions into innovations that can be commercialised." In order to achieve this, a whole eco-system of innovation has to be created through enabling government policy, revisiting the role of research institutions, resourcing them, and building capabilities into them to solve social problems. "Currently, there is a concerning disconnect between research capability and the ability to solve societal problems as basic as housing, telecommunications, healthcare, and education."

He added that universities could also unlock greater potential in their human resources by knocking down their hierarchical structures. "In a less formal, problem-solving culture, there are no holy cows. Anyone can question authority, and this environment unleashes great innovative potential." He argued that he had learned from organisational culture innovations he introduced at Telkom in the early 2000s, and also at FirstRand, that "culture determines performance".

NDP a means towards government, university and business collaboration on research and innovation (continued)

In order to become globally competitive, Dr Nxasana said that South Africa had to undergo a metamorphosis. “Academics need to aim research and innovation at solving real-life problems on the continent.” He also suggested that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), as the custodian of policy, could possibly channel a portion of funding to universities for innovation output. “Universities, in response, must also teach entrepreneurship in a way that translates knowledge into commercial activity.”

In his closing remarks, Dr Nxasana argued that as universities sought to commercialise innovations, the banking sector should be ready to meet them halfway by providing funding solutions. “When I analysed financial statements of all major banks in our system, I found that we all take three times more in deposits from small and medium-sized enterprises than we give in loans to this sector. Our low appetite for risk-taking disadvantages entrepreneurship and innovation.”

He concluded by stating that more structured dialogue and collaboration between government, the science and research community, academia and the business sector held the key to not only increased research and innovation output for better economic growth, but could also lead to more comprehensive and inclusive national reporting.



Research & Innovation the gateway to economic and national development

As a leader once, quite pointedly, said: "Knowledge is the currency of the global economy." If South Africa intends to compete successfully in the world economy, it has to pay sufficient attention to its research and innovation (R&I) capabilities and capacities. It is generally acknowledged that R&I create jobs and grow the economy. An appreciation of the role of R&I in national development suffused discussions at the recent HESA 3rd Biennial Research and Innovation Conference held on 2 and 3 April 2014 under the general theme of *Higher Education Engaging with the National Development Plan: Exploring the Possibilities and Limits in Research and Innovation*.

Since its adoption by government as a macro-policy framework, the National Development Plan (NDP) has become a key feature of policy discussions in South Africa and abroad. A number of government departments are gradually beginning to align their own plans with the priorities of the NDP, although progress in this regard has been uneven.

As indicated above under the section 'Universities challenged to boost SA's R&I capacity', the NDP has identified a number of priorities for the higher education sector, including but not limited to the following: -

- Increase the percentage of academic staff with a PhD qualification from 34% to 75% by 2030.
- Increase the participation rate in higher education so that total enrolments reach 1.62 million by 2030.
- Increase the throughput rate at institutions for higher education to more than 75% (or the present graduation rate by more than 25%).
- Increase the number of post-graduate students to 25% of total enrolments by 2030.
- Produce more than 100 doctoral graduates per million of the total population by 2030.
- Double the number of science students graduating, and increase the number of women and black post-graduates.

With regard to research, the NDP acknowledges that there are "multiple sites of research and knowledge production, and that this presents a challenge for co-ordination". It has been known for quite some time that there is indeed a real co-ordination challenge between government departments, as well as a lack of co-ordination between universities and other research institutions, including science councils.

It is against this background that HESA convened the 2014 Research and Innovation Conference, which brought together university leaders, executives, senior government officials, and representatives from the science and research community and industry to discuss better ways of translating the NDP's research and innovation priorities into actionable initiatives within the current context of funding and other constraints. Discussions focussed on the 'do-able' and the extent to which capacity within the sector can be strengthened in order to meet higher education research and innovation priorities. In a nutshell, the following commitments were made:

First, there was recognition that HESA, the Department of Science and Technology (DST), and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) should prioritise the implementation of a programme to develop the next generation of academics. To this end, a proposal developed by HESA should form the basis for such a discussion by mid-2014. The DHET also committed itself to conducting a survey of all existing scholarships available to Masters and PhD students in order to maximise opportunities for black and women students intending to pursue an academic career.

Second, the conference further noted that a major challenge for the sector is the current limited output of masters and doctoral graduates, which poses clear constraints for the transformation of the next generation of academics. In order to improve supervisory capacity within the higher education sector and enable the cross-fertilisation of 'best practice' within the sector, the conference agreed that a compendium of existing 'best practice' in support of post-graduate students should be compiled and shared across the sector.

Third, it was also noted that one of the key enabling conditions for a thriving R&I system in South Africa is access to 'international literature' by researchers, scholars (academics), and students. However, given the inequities of the past, some of our universities are unable to access this important scholarly material. Conference again resolved that the DHET, the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), the DST and HESA should prioritise the creation of a national licensing agreement that would ensure that all universities have access to electronic knowledge resources in order to improve their productivity and research output.

Research & Innovation the gateway to economic and national development (*continued*)

Fourth, another issue which received dedicated attention was the need to strengthen partnerships between universities and industry, particularly in the area of R&I. Such partnerships will:

- advance knowledge-creation through supporting high quality research relevant to the South African economy;
- build enduring relationships between university researchers and industry partners and help address critical problems facing South Africa;
- enhance student training to prepare a future workforce and industry leaders, and position South Africa for international competitiveness; and
- accelerate the transfer of research innovations and technological advancement to South African industry.



In order to give effect to such partnerships, HESA will convene a high-level meeting between vice-chancellors of universities and captains of industry, in part to discuss the task of making South Africa a leading R&I marketplace, as well as a destination of choice for researchers and innovators across the globe. Linked to this, the off-shoring of research and development (R&D) expenditure, made possible by the listing of some South African companies abroad, will be discussed.

A fundamental question remains: to what extent can these conference outcomes be implemented? All participants have stressed a need for an alignment between policy aspirations and policy levers, including funding, planning, and institutional capacities and capabilities. In other words, the NDP's implementation depends on the extent to which its priorities are going to be funded and co-ordinated by relevant line departments.

It is predicated, therefore, on some level of capacity and capability within government line departments, as well as within universities and industry. As Minister Trevor Manuel put it to the conference, implementation will require all stakeholders to (re)imagine the South Africa of tomorrow, free of poverty, unemployment and inequality. Clearly, stakeholders should seize the moment.

HELM LEAD establishes itself as a major capacity development initiative

HESA's HELM LEAD (Higher Education Leadership and Management --- Leadership), focusing on middle management in higher education institutions (HEIs), is beginning to prove itself as a formidable sector-support programme, according to feedback received from some of the latest cohort of Fellows. The intervention in October and December 2013, for example, exposed Fellows to no less than 13 experts per contact session, who shared information, insights and varying perspectives on selected topics pertinent to leadership and management within a South African university.



Dr Chrisna Botha (NWU): "I learned a lot. I felt in the right place. This training was definitely where I needed to be"

"Very positive" is how Dr Chrisna Botha, Senior Lecturer in the School for Physiology, Nutrition and Consumer Science at North-West University (NWU), describes her experience of this programme. She notes that the presentations on 'Institutional Planning', 'Successful Leadership', 'Internationalisation', 'Transformation Imperatives', and 'Corporate Governance' (King III applied to the university environment) were of particular interest. She also feels that she gained immensely from the discussions on 'Management of Quality and Transformation', 'Challenges and Prospects of Learning and Teaching', and from insights shared on the 'Legislative Framework and Implications for the Higher Education Sector'.

HELM LEAD is uniquely tailored for the sector

Dr Botha says that although business management qualifications equip graduates to manage across the board, they offer more generic management content "which could never sufficiently prepare me for the inner workings of a university".

For instance, managing finances in a university is a lot different from doing it in any other organisation, she argues. "It is not as though you can only look at the cost of a product or service and the amount of sales in order to estimate success."

Some funding is granted by government and you need to apply it for a specified purpose. Some you need to look for, and some you generate from your core business. This is, however, not where it stops; the utilisation and distribution of money between faculties and departments is a very intricate exercise and needs very careful planning. As with any business, accountability is very important. Public universities are, in essence, working with taxpayers' money. We do not want to be perceived as wasting resources, so we have a greater responsibility to be accountable." In comparison to generic business administration training, she found the HELM LEAD material excellently customised to address day-to-day challenges confronting managers within the university environment.

Dr Botha further notes that HELM LEAD enables Fellows to be able to take up leadership positions without having been in the system for many years. She, therefore, concludes that from the workshop materials so perfectly structured and appropriately packaged, "I learned a lot. I felt that I was in the right place. Looking back, this training was definitely where I needed to be."

A journey of self-discovery

Echoing this sentiment, Dr Nombulelo Lubisi, Senior Lecturer and Deputy Dean, Faculty of Law at the University of Fort Hare (UFH), describes her time at HELM LEAD as an incredible experience for "the leader that I aspire to become".

Dr Lubisi says the training touched on the most pertinent areas of positive leadership, strategic planning and execution for results, personal branding and marketing, as well as the values of integrity, authenticity, empathy, transparency, and so on. "To me it was a true journey of discovery; to find out who I am, where I am, and how to become a stronger leader in the future. What I have learnt is that there are no limits to what one can accomplish. This was really an excellent programme that enabled me to critically assess my own capabilities, and it provided me with the necessary tools that will help me as I continue to grow in my profession."



Dr Nombulelo Lubisi (UFH): "HELM LEAD is a great investment of taxpayers' money and Fellows' time"

HELM LEAD establishes itself as a major capacity development initiative *(continued)*

Prof Fulufhelo Godfrey Netswera, Director of the Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership at the University of Limpopo (UL), notes that he particularly enjoyed the debates that ensued after presentations by Prof Adam Habib and Prof Nthabiseng Ogude, Vice-Chancellor and Principal at Wits and the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), respectively.

The debates centred on leadership versus the dual role-play between scholarship and leadership. Prof Netswera states that “because the general assumption is that if you are a good scholar then you are a potential leadership candidate, this common perception sets people up for failure. Although the debates did not yield a simple consensus, what emerged very strongly was that to lead in the academic sector you need to have a strong leadership background.”

While Prof Netswera highly commended the expert line-up in the workshops, he also offered suggestions to make this intervention even more exciting. “I would recommend a panel discussion by a few university leaders (for example, Vice-Chancellors and Deputy Vice-Chancellors) with Fellows on important challenges to the sector and possible solutions. This format could enable more rigorous exchange and perhaps even more tangible outcomes than the current lecture-room format.”



HELM Lead Fellows say they find the intervention highly enriching

HELM LEAD yields solid results

- I am grateful for what the HELM LEAD project has done in my academic life. I was a young director in the School for Ministers' Training and still had to learn a lot, especially about academic leadership. Post-HELM LEAD, I applied for the post of Vice-Rector Teaching-Learning Designate and was appointed. The training I received during the project played a significant part in how I performed in the job interview - **Prof Rantsoa Letsosa, North-West University (NWU), Potchefstroom Campus.**
- The HELM LEAD programme deepened my understanding of quality assurance processes. I acquired good leadership pointers which continually helps me to face challenges in achieving results in very complex situations. It enabled me to gain leadership skills and strategies that capacitated me to be part of the drive towards building a great university - **Mrs Nonzuzo Zikalala, Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).**
- At the time of enrolling as a HELM LEAD Fellow, I was the Acting Associate Professor in my department. I have since December 2013 been promoted and confirmed as Associate Professor. My exposure to the dynamic HELM LEAD speakers gave me insights in people management, conflict resolution, and what is expected of a head of department. That prepared me for this position. The networking that started at those contact sessions led to continued information-sharing with my peers. I performed very well at my job interview and the rest is history – **Prof Nokuthula Sibiyi, Head: Department of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, Durban University of Technology (DUT).**
- I believe my life and insights have been significantly enriched by the HELM LEAD programme, and I would encourage all academics aspiring to climb up the university ladder to become part of this project – **Prof Tahir Pillay, University of Pretoria (UP).**

In conclusion, Dr Lubisi of UFH states: “The information disseminated during this programme was spectacular. I extend my gratitude to the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP-SETA) for the change they are making in our lives, naturally in partnership with HESA. HELM LEAD is a great investment of taxpayers' money and in the careers of Fellows.”

CEO paving way for a more focused and effective HESA

Higher Education South Africa must, sooner rather than later, reposition itself as a true voice of public universities in South Africa, states HESA CEO Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele, who recently celebrated his first anniversary in this position. In an exclusive interview on his vision for HESA, Dr Mabelebele argues that, as a starting point, HESA's profile would be enhanced significantly if its current positioning, as the representative of vice-chancellors of public universities only, is reviewed.

He posits that as the voice of public universities in South Africa, HESA stands to gain legitimacy not only in the higher education sector but also, more broadly, in society. The organisation will be recognised by government as the bona fide facilitator of government-university engagements on issues relating to national development. Furthermore, HESA will gain in stature in the business community, through which meaningful partnerships with universities could be forged. "Finally, HESA will also be recognised as a scholarly-oriented entity, able to initiate research projects and studies to inform policy developments in the higher education sector."

Secondly, Dr Mabelebele wants to enhance cohesion within HESA and strengthen the interface between the Board and various governance and advisory structures within the organisation. In his own words: this is "to ensure that we --- be it the governance committees, strategy groups, 'communities of practice', the Executive Committee, or Board --- all pull in the same direction in appreciating and implementing sector priorities. Unity of purpose and action is critical." He states that part of his responsibility as CEO is to ensure that the right hand knows what the left hand is doing; not to speak past one another or to step on each other's toes when it comes to key issues. "We also need to improve our relations with government so as to ultimately be perceived as true partners to the state in whatever objectives the government sets for itself."

Thirdly, the CEO believes that it is imperative that high-calibre staff committed to the cause of the higher education project must be attracted, and those retained who are prepared to go beyond the call of duty to contribute towards this end. This will require introducing development plans for current staff members to meet future expectations, and the acquiring of new sets of competencies in order to address new and emerging demands. "I seek to recruit and retain a workforce that is passionate about the higher education project and its contribution to national development."

Dr Mabelebele acknowledges that since assuming the office of CEO more than a year ago, he has received "unprecedented support from Vice-Chancellors, especially in relation to the kind of things we want to achieve". For example, Vice-Chancellors, who constitute HESA's Board of Directors, acceded to take a fresh look at the organisation and, in the CEO's words, "ask ourselves whether we exist for what we were established". He adds that this is the first time in HESA history that this kind of introspection is taking place. "It is important that we ask ourselves these kinds of existential questions." This conversation is sure to be entered into, as some of its key considerations are reflected in HESA's strategic plan currently under development.



HESA stands to gain legitimacy if re-positioned as the voice of public universities in South Africa

The development of HESA's strategic plan underway

"Since January 2014 we have been engaged in the process of developing a strategic plan for HESA, and we are now working on a draft document. We hope that at its meeting in July 2014, the HESA Board will be able to endorse the final strategic plan, which we will then present to the higher education sector and the nation."

This plan, among other things, seeks to reinvigorate the vision of HESA and its mission. It is designed to rejuvenate the organisation's range of initiatives in order to advance the interests of the higher education sector in our country. If approved, we can say without fear of contradiction that this plan will put HESA on an entirely different level going forward."

Engaging Parliament

"We intend to sharpen our engagements with Parliament this year. The aim will be to deepen the understanding of South Africa's higher education challenges, but also to engage in a conversation of mutual interest as to how best legislators can advance the cause of higher education. We wish to arrange a seminar with the newly inaugurated Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training after the May 2014 elections."

Public lectures

"We intend to entrench our public lecture series in 2014. These are public lectures where topical issues facing higher education are identified, and a national conversation around these issues is then initiated by means of follow-up lectures. We don't have the numbers yet, but we started these lectures in 2013 and we intend to entrench them in 2014."

HEAIDS solidly supported and promising in 2014



The past year, which saw the Higher Education and Training HIV & AIDS Programme (HEAIDS) attracting enormous cash injections from various partners, raised the bar for HEAIDS in 2014. During the second half of 2013, HEAIDS received just under R51 million for programme expansion in the Further Education and Training (FET) sector. These developments make 2014 “a very challenging year of experimentation, lots of hard work, and strategic thinking”, says Programme Director, Dr Ramneek Ahluwalia.

He notes that when he inherited the programme in 2011, funding had been reduced from R200 million to just R15 million. “This dip in resources presented a massive challenge in terms of how we were going to make this work.” Today, not only is the programme well-staffed and financially secure, it has more than tripled its reach, thus increasing its potential in ways never seen before.

From focusing on universities alone, with approximately 126 campuses countrywide, “we will now be looking after a cumulative population of more than 2 million, spread over more than 400 campuses nationwide”, Dr Ahluwalia says. “That was the vision and dream I had when I joined this programme. Everyone entertained that dream, but no-one deemed it even possible. I feel proud that during my tenure, the whole post-school education system has been brought together under one umbrella.”

He states that this all-inclusive, public-sector approach means HEAIDS is mandated to reach out to any student in the entire post-school education system. This means that as soon as a learner leaves high school and becomes an adult, he or she is now well looked after by this programme.

Programme now solidly staffed

The massive funding support has also translated into programme growth in terms of personnel. HEAIDS now employ provincial teams, with each province led by a co-ordinator. “We have senior managers, programme managers, provincial co-ordinators, and lots of administrators in our regional offices. We now have human resources well-equipped with both expertise and management skills. We have people with over 15 years and more experience in the field of HIV & AIDS, and in the fields of social change, knowledge and capacity generation. These are highly specialised skills within the HIV programme. We now look towards them to ensure that support to the universities and to FET colleges are provided, and that our students are safe, looked after, and that all the money that comes through the programme’s critical partners is utilised effectively.”

The Programme Director: HEAIDS notes that his most important measure of programme success at the end of 2014 will be demonstrated by the ability to reach all 400 campuses of public universities and FETs. “Our ability to reach everybody with our message, and to prevent these students from ever becoming HIV positive, will be most critical.”

Meaningful partnerships credited for inroads made

HEAIDS is also indebted to the National Skills Fund (NSF) of South Africa for investing R25 million for 3½ years towards curriculum development and for HIV research. For the massive technical capability of testing students for HIV at institutions of higher learning, Dr Ahluwalia says credit goes to the US government - more specifically, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). “Some of our biggest campaigns, like the award-winning 'First Things First', 'Brothers-for-life', 'ZAZI' and 'Balance Your Life', are happening as a direct result of their funding. We have just now been awarded R50 million from the US government for the next five years. This is in addition to another R15 million that secured us mobile clinics, fully equipped with health nurses, testing counsellors and drivers who will take our health personnel from campus to campus, testing and supporting students.”

HEAIDS solidly supported and promising in 2014 *(continued)*



Part of the HEAIDS staff who joined in 2014 at their formal induction in January



Dr Ahluwalia states that what the Department of Health, in partnership with the US government, contribute to the programme cannot be easily quantified. “I estimate close on R130 million for the next five years: in addition to mobile clinics, they equipped us --- everything from testing kits, the ability to appoint personnel and much, much more. This support is not easily quantifiable in rand terms.”

“And then we have the German government, which is supporting a huge HIV & AIDS communication project. For an amount close to R1 million, the German government provides us with technical expertise to disseminate our message through campus radio and the social media. I'd also like to thank the United Nations and its partners for technical support for this very important endeavour.”

Effective leadership within the higher education system has also been instrumental in realising the progress made to date. “HEAIDS would not be what it is without the unwavering leadership of every Vice-Chancellor, FET Principal, and the CEO of HESA. My greatest gratitude goes to my HEAIDS teams: university managers who work day and night providing peer education, and young students who do the footwork for this programme on their respective campuses.”

Meet the senior management at HESA



Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). He is responsible for the leadership and management of HESA. He also oversees the full range of HESA's engagement with external partners, co-ordinating priorities and shaping the future policy agenda on behalf of member institutions.



Dr Berene Kramer is Director: Operations and Sector Support. She is responsible for internal leadership and co-ordination of projects within HESA. In addition, she also oversees the work of the Matriculation Board and the Higher Education Leadership and Management (HELM) programme, and international partnerships.



Dr Abbey Matheka is Senior Manager: Higher Education Enrolment Services. He is responsible for the leadership and management of the Matriculation Board and National Information Service for Higher Education (NISHE).



Dr Ramneek Ahluwalia is Programme Director: Higher Education & Training HIV&AIDS programme (HEAIDS). He is responsible for the leadership and management of HEAIDS. He oversees the expansion of the HEAIDS programme into the FET college sector in collaboration with a range of partners, including government and the South African National Aids Council (SANAC).



Mr Emert Nkhatu is Director: Finance and Administration. He is responsible for the leadership and management of a suite of corporate services functions, including finance, human resources, information technology, and the management of facilities.



Ms Jana van Wyk is Senior Manager: CEO's Office. She is responsible for providing strategic and secretariat support to a range of HESA's governance committees, including the Board, Executive Committee, and Legal Advisory Committee. In addition, she is responsible for the management and leadership of a range of company secretariat-related functions within HESA.