

## **DHET transforms historically neglected sector**

With three million young South Africans not in education or employment, and generations of adults who had previously not been able to access higher education and training, the newly established Councils for the Community Education and Training Colleges (CETs) have a mountain to climb to curb the scourge of critical skills.

The establishment of the CETs marks the birth of the first new institutional type in post-apartheid South Africa with the inauguration recently of the first-ever councils for the CETs.

Not since the establishment of universities and the erstwhile technikons and technical colleges has there been a completely new form of public education and training institution in South Africa.

Community Education and Training Colleges primarily target adults for second chance learning and re-skilling for either further education, employment or self-employment.

This sector is the heartbeat for the promotion of social justice.

The doors of education, training and opportunity are now opened wide for those of our peoples who were in the past denied opportunities; who now lack relevant skills and who still dream the dream of a better life.

The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande said that it gave him great pleasure to officially welcome the newly-appointed Community College council members to the DHET stable.

“Councils are tasked with providing good governance and oversight to ensure that the activities of college management culminate in the attainment of our strategic goals and objectives contained in the White Paper on Post-School Education and Training,” he said.

He told the delegates that Community Education and Training Colleges are not the same as Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and the Universities, but in his words “they are not less important” as they will be changing lives by responding to local community needs.

Thus far, nine Community Education and Training Colleges have been established – one in each province – and are now responsible for the administration and management of the merged 3,276 former Adult Education and Training Centres..