Towards an integrated post-secondary education system in South Africa: A case study of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

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Overview of presentation

1. Context of HE transformation in South Africa
2. What reality should South African HE be responding to?
3. Conceptualising a multi-dimensional framework for HE transformation M&E in South Africa
4. Exploring transformation M&E indicators
CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA
Requisite levels of HE transformation

Systemic

Institutional

Personal
# HE transformation: Post-1994 policy transitions

|-----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| • Primary concern: establishment of a new HE regulatory framework and rethinking role of HE in a democratic, developmental context  
• Goals, strategies, structures and instruments to pursue HE transformation goals  
• Focus on access, equity and redress of historical inequalities | • Primary concern: HE restructuring through mergers and incorporations, improved efficiency, “performativity”, QA, enrolment planning, PQMs, responsiveness to labour market, global competitiveness  
• Influence of neo-liberal, market orientation | • Primary concern: Role of HE in a knowledge-driven society  
• Widen participation in a diverse, differentiated post-school E&T system  
• Focus on access with success  
• Diversify academic and HE management staff profiles  
• New wave of revolutionary intellectual/knowledge transformation? |
**Goals of HE transformation**

According to policy, what would a transformed HE system look like in South Africa?

| Increased and broadened participation, including equity of access and fair chances of success especially for black, women, disabled and mature students while eradicating all forms of unfair discrimination and advancing redress for past inequalities | Deliver requisite knowledge and highly trained graduates to equip a developing society to address national needs and to participate in a rapidly changing and competitive global context through high-quality teaching, learning, and research | A single, coordinated, integrated and well-articulated system which is sufficiently diverse and differentiated in organisational forms, institutional missions and programmes offered | Enabling and democratic institutional ethos and culture conducive to critical discourse and creative thinking, cultural tolerance, sensitive to and affirming of diversity, and promotes respect for human life |

**Common commitment to a humane, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic social order**
Policy goals in tension

Equity, access and redress

Efficiency, quality and sustainability
Principles underpinning HE transformation

- Equity and redress
- Quality
- Academic freedom
- Institutional autonomy
- Public accountability
- Effectiveness and efficiency
- Responsiveness and public good purposes
- Cooperative governance
WHAT REALITY SHOULD SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION BE RESPONDING TO?
National Development Plan Diagnostic Overview

- Poverty
- Inequality
- Unemployment

Triple challenge
Vision for integrated post-school education

Colleges

Rooted in and serving the needs of their communities by providing first-choice vocational education and training.

Universities

Prolific creators of knowledge provide high quality university education for increasing numbers.

PSET landscape

Skills authorities and employers

Improve relationships between educational institutions and employers; opportunities for workplace learning.

Regulatory environment: Government/Quality councils

Provide regulatory framework for quality assurance, safeguard standards, programme approval, articulation agreements.
Global higher education participation rates

OECD Average 40-50%

South Asia <15%

Sub-Saharan Africa <10%

Higher Education Participation
National Development Plan: Vision 2030 targets

**Further education**
- FET college enrolments expected to increase from 7% (300,000 learners) to 25% (1.25m learners)
- Improve graduation rate from 40% to 75%
- Produce 30,000 artisans per annum

**Higher Education**
- Increase HE participation rate from 17% (950,000 learners in 2010) to 30% (1.62m learners)
- Increase proportion of academic staff with PhDs from 34% to 75%
- Increase PhD graduates from 1,420 to 5,000 per annum

Access with success
"It is indeed a terrible game of snakes and ladders. Each time we move ahead we come crashing down. We must not underestimate the impact of apartheid.” - Kirti Menon, Higher Education Unaffordable For Poor In South Africa (2013)
How do we respond to the challenge?

“We can throw stones, complain about them, stumble on them, climb over them, or build with them.”

- William Arthur Ward
HOW DOES THIS INFORM A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CONCEPTUALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION MONITORING AND EVALUATION?
Multi-dimensional conceptualisation of HE transformation M&E

- Desired systemic outputs and outcomes – articulate these clearly
- Institutional histories and contexts
- Institutional visions, missions and values
- System-wide policy goals and principles
- Institutional cultures

HE transformation – systemic and institutional levels
Key questions in HE transformation M&E

What?  
How?  
Who?
What to monitor and evaluate?

Each dimension of the HE system needs to be monitored and evaluated to assess the pace, extent and impact of transformation interventions.

- **Inputs**
  - Examples:
    - Funding
    - Incoming students
    - Staff
    - Infrastructure

- **Processes**
  - Examples:
    - T&L and curriculum development
    - Research/scholarship
    - Engagement
    - Institutional processes
    - Student and staff development

- **Outputs**
  - Examples:
    - Graduates – UG & PG
    - Staff qualifications
    - Research publications
    - Partnerships

- **Outcomes**
  - Examples:
    - Graduate employability
    - Impact of research & engagement
Depending on our understanding of the current context, we should implement alternative practices appropriately.
How to monitor and evaluate?

Quantitative methods (numbers)
- Performance indicators and indices
- Surveys

Qualitative methods (stories)
- Content analysis
- Discourse analysis
- Narratives
- Focus groups
Who should monitor and evaluate?

**Systemic**
- DHET/DST/DoL
- CHE
- MTOC

**Institutional**
- Senior management
- Institutional research
- Transformation/Equity Office

**Personal**
- You and me
- Critical self-reflection
- Learning about self & other
THANK YOU!

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