

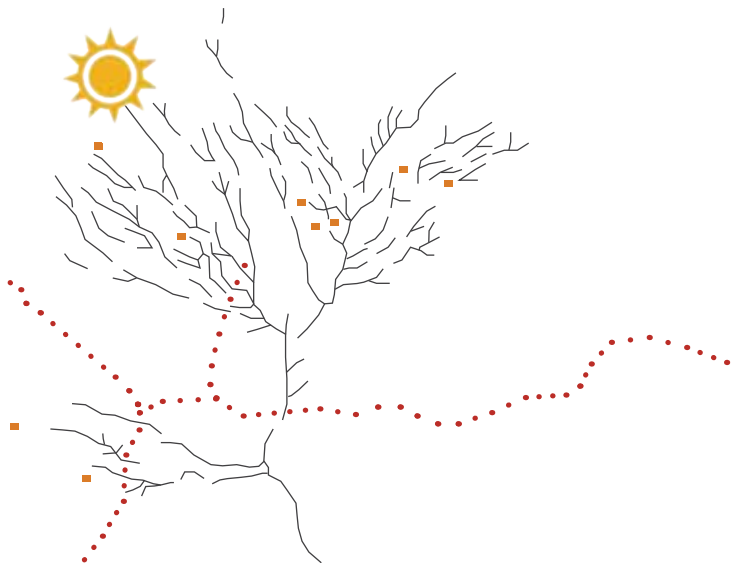



higher education  
& training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**REPORT COMMISSIONED BY THE  
MINISTER OF HIGHER  
EDUCATION & TRAINING**  
FOR THE CHARTER FOR **HUMANITIES**  
AND **SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
FINAL REPORT 30 JUNE 2011





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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has been a demanding and exhausting road to this Charter and its recommendations. The work of the Task Team would have been impossible without the warm and challenging support of the Reference Group both here and abroad, the tireless administrators who worked beyond the call of duty and the 1 453 individuals who gave generously to this endeavour – students, junior and senior academics, civil society and trade union activists, leaders in NGOs, government and business, deans and university executives. We thank you, it took more than a village to raise this child.

Ari Sitas

Sarah Mosoetsa

Bianca Tame

Aisha Lorgat

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## FOREWORD

I commissioned this Charter initiative and its Report because I was convinced that we needed a robust post-Apartheid Higher Education system and because the Humanities and the Social Sciences have or ought to have a major role in defining its character, its excellence and values.

Its post-Apartheid character is indispensable.

The apartheid regime and its predecessors made no great effort to educate black people, particularly Africans. Their main purpose was to provide just enough knowledge to allow most Africans to function as unskilled (and later semi-skilled) labourers, some to work as teachers, ministers of religion and nurses or Bantustan administrators. Consequently the education provided did not place much emphasis on learning areas in the natural sciences. This policy had a devastating impact that we are still feeling the effects of today.

Not only did entire generations of African children suffer from deprivation, but most of today's teachers suffered as well. Assessments of the subject knowledge of teachers show that many have a serious deficiency of mathematical and scientific knowledge. The fact that most children generally learn in a language that is not their home language - and is also the second or third language of their teachers - does not help either.

So, without belabouring the point, it should be fairly obvious why the South African government has placed great emphasis on critical areas of skills shortage such as engineering, technology, the physical sciences and certain areas of business studies such as accounting. I agree with this emphasis which is actually not unique to South Africa as economies around the world become increasingly technologically dependent.

However, there is always a danger that too singular a focus on certain areas will lead to a neglect of other equally important areas. My suspicion that the humanities and social sciences were being neglected and becoming weaker was what prompted me to approach Prof Ari Sitas about this and what led me to appoint the two-person task team of Prof Sitas and Dr Sarah Mosoetsa to look into how the social sciences can be strengthened.

From the work of the task team it is clear that many academics in the social sciences share my concerns and many feel that government policies and internal institutional practices share responsibility for this. While it is debatable whether the humanities and social sciences (HSS) in South African universities is in crisis, it is clear that, on the whole, it could and should be a lot stronger in order to play the role it could be playing in the development of our society, our economy and our intellectual life.

It is clear to anyone who is a public social or political activist - as I am - that the Humanities and Social Sciences in the post 1994 period are playing a less prominent role in public discourse than they did during the late apartheid period. They seem also to play a less prominent role in the lives of students, guiding their thinking about the crucial issues that face them as students or as citizens concerned about the future of their societies.

Of course, today's social struggles are not as clear cut as they were when there was a single overarching aim: defeating apartheid. Today we face a whole new set of challenges as a country and, of course, also as social scientists. Even most of the progressive social scientists no longer identify with a social project or a social movement which shapes their consciousness and their work. It's disturbing to note that debate is so muted around the major problems that face our society. Crucial debates on the direction that our country should be moving in are currently taking place within the tripartite alliance and between representatives of government, business and labour. Pover policy on economic development, social development, health, energy, rural development, education and training, and so on. Yet the academic voice remains very subdued. Even the student movement which is based right on the university campuses seems strangely devoid of mentorship and guidance from academics.

Why is this? It can't be the result of individual academics shirking their responsibilities. Some may, but many that I know do not. The absence of a large and relatively coherent social movement striving to attain a common goal, resulting in a rupture between popular struggles and the social sciences, is no doubt part of the explanation.

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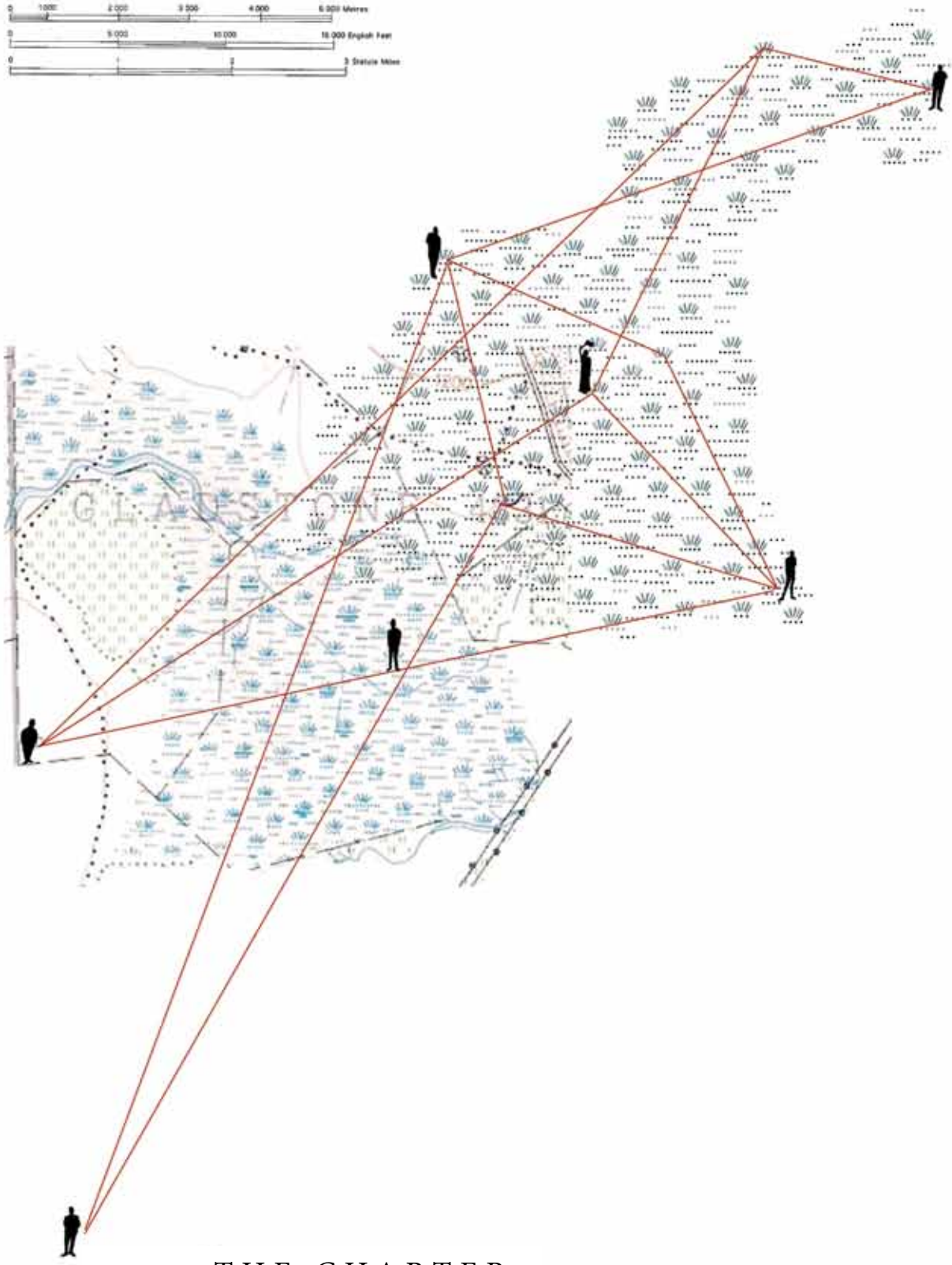
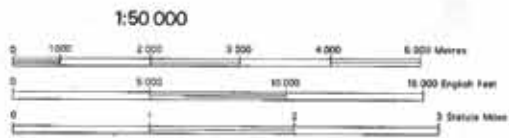
A disorientation resulting from the rapid changes our society has undergone is possibly another. The changing nature of universities and the expectations of academics may also partly account for it. Possibly the increased commodification of knowledge or the need for academics to earn part of their incomes through consultancies - and therefore having less time for purely academic work or being tied into the agenda of 'clients' - has played a part. Have they simply retired into their shells, quietly doing their work and not participating publicly in the larger social and political debates?

Perhaps they haven't. But with a few notable exceptions I'm not seeing them. As a country, we desperately need the voices of progressive academics, putting forward their views based on empirical research and carefully analysis. Burning questions, some requiring meta-analysis of the small scale studies that many academics are already doing, cry out for exposition and analysis. Examples of areas requiring work include: the nature of our transition and how it compares with other countries; the changing nature of South Africa's class structure; globalisation and what it means for ordinary people and developing countries; the content of transformation in South Africa; how transformation can be different from a narrow BEE agenda or from elite feminist promotion; the role and effectiveness of tri-partite bodies like NEDLAC; South Africa's skills development strategy and the role of the SETAs; the higher education system and its position in South African society; the burning questions of language, art and literature in a post-colonial world, the government's emerging plans such as the work of the National Planning Commission; the prospects and modalities of development of the African continent and its manifold forms of heritage; the changing international landscape and how it could affect developing countries and South Africa in particular; the global economic crisis and its political and ideological implications.

Some of these questions are particularly important as we move into a post-Washington consensus period. The recent economic crisis and the rise of China, India and Brazil to the status of major powers are both causing not only a new realignment of economics and politics in the world, but a re-questioning of the neo-liberal orthodoxies of the past two decades.

The task team report has made wide-ranging, ambitious and bold recommendation which will be scrutinised further. I hope that the Charter for the Humanities and Social Sciences report assists us in reaching some of these goals.

**Dr. B.E. Nzimande**  
**Minister of Higher Education and Training**



# THE CHARTER

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## CHARTER FOR HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

### Task Team

Prof. Ari Sitas	Director of the Ministerial Task Team
Dr Sarah Mosoetsa	Deputy Director
Ms Aisha Lorgat	Researcher
Ms Bianca Tame	Coordinator

### Local Reference Group Members

Ms Nazli Abrahams	Manager, Advancement Training and Organisational Support, Inyathelo, Cape Town
Prof. Rose Boswell	Head, Department of Anthropology, Rhodes University
Ms Elmarie Costandius	Visual Communication Design, Department of Visual Arts, Stellenbosch University
Prof. Heilna du Plooy	Professor and Head of Subject Group, Afrikaans and Dutch School of Languages, North-West University, Potchefstroom
Prof. Shamil Jeppie	Department of Historical Studies, University of Cape Town; Co-Chair of Sephis (South-South exchange programme in the history of development)
Mr Paul Kgobe	Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD)
Dr Lionel R. Louw	National Director, Harold Wolpe Memorial Trust, Cape Town
Prof. Nhlanhla Maake	Executive Dean, Faculty of Humanities, University of Limpopo
Prof. Duma Malaza	CEO, Higher Education South Africa (HESA), Pretoria
Prof. Nhlanhla Mkhize	Dean of Humanities, Development and Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal
Dr Nara Monkam	Deputy Director, African Tax Institute, Department of Economics, University of Pretoria
Dr John Pampallis	Special Advisor to the Minister of Higher Education and Training
Prof. Joseph Teffo	Director: Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Pretoria
Dr Malehoko Tshoaeidi	Department of Sociology, University of Johannesburg
Prof. Peter Vale	Co-Chair, ASSAf Consensus Panel on the Humanities; Nelson Mandela Chair of Politics at Rhodes University; Professor of Humanities at University of Johannesburg



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#### International Reference Group Members

Prof. Maurice Aymard	General Secretary, International Council of Philosophy and Humanities (ICPHS). Formerly Vice-Director and Director of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme created by Fernand Braudel.
Prof. Theotônio dos Santos	Brazilian economist and political scientist, Emeritus Professor at Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF). Coordinator and Chair of UNU-UNESCO network of Global Economy and Sustainable Development.
Prof. Hernes Gudmund	President, International Social Science Council. Formerly President of the International Sociological Association, served as Minister of Education (Norway), Research and Ecclesiastic Affairs, joined UNESCO as Director of the Paris-based International Institute for Educational Planning, and was UNESCO's Coordinator for HIV/AIDS in the period 2001–2005.
Dr Heide Hackmann	Secretary-General, International Social Science Council. Previously Head of International Relations and Quality Assessment, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), The Netherlands; policy positions at the Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa.
Prof. Mridula Mukherjee	Director, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; Professor of Modern Indian History at Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University.
Dr Ebrima Sall	Executive Secretary, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). Previously Senior Researcher at the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI), Uppsala (Sweden), and Director, Centre for the Promotion of Village Savings and Credit Associations (VISAC), Gambia.

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## ACRONYMS

ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
ASSAf	Academy of Science of South Africa
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India and China and South Africa
CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CODESRIA	Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoL	Department of Labour
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EDF	Education Deans' Forum
FET	Further Education and Training
HESA	Higher Education South Africa
HET	Higher Education and Training
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
HSS	Humanities and Social Sciences
IBSA	India, Brazil, South Africa
ISA	International Sociological Association
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NLRD	National Learners' Records Database
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NRF	National Research Foundation
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAHUDA	South African Humanities Deans' Association
SANPAD	South Africa-Netherlands Research Programme on Alternatives in Development
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
UNESCO	United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organisation
UNISA	University of South Africa

## THE CHARTER FOR HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES - PREAMBLE

The child of January 2012 will enter the university gate of 2030 to study Aeronautical Engineering, confident that she is not driftwood and that her clans come from a long way back.

She will be bilingual, and her mother tongue and her English will be interchangeably strong – she can write and she can talk and, if need be, compose poems on periodic tables.

There at the university of 2030 she will be exposed to a deeper understanding of diversity, and to the experience that Others from both far and near are wonder-full in their own ways.

She will come to meet quite a number of them; if she needs a semester to study the poetry of Aimé Césaire in the original because her Caribbean high school teacher inspired her to do so, she might take a semester off to study in Dakar or Cairo or Paris.

If she wants to strengthen her quantum physics, there will be Hyderabad, Beijing or Stanford.

If she wants to take a breather from complicated equations about the stress modulus in variegated metals, she could do an elective on VhaVenda art or the Nando Song Cycles of the ironsmiths of the past.

She will be an engineer; but the humanities and the social sciences will have played their bit part in the making of a good and educated engineer.

And she will look back and wonder about the dark times and the times of confusion that her parents speak about, and hopefully she will stop with a smile at the thought of that interregnum year of her birth, and perchance this Charter is on some shelf gathering dust and it so happens that she pages through it, we hope that she does so in amazement: such a plain, obvious and trivial piece of text.

Our work will have been done.

Yet for her to be “there” would mean that the Humanities

and the Social Sciences had become stronger than ever in this country. Most certainly, they would have to be more than an “adjunct” to Engineering, Science, Technology, Medicine and/or Actuarial Qualification. They would be what this Charter intended.

First, for her to know that she was not driftwood and that her clans came from a long way back, presupposes a close link between the teachers of tomorrow and deep Humanities research. The metaphor comes from Mazisi Kunene’s poetry, and to get the metaphor right we need to understand his discord, the Zulu intellectuals’ of the 1940s and 1950s usage of isiZulu, the way their metaphors were linked to other sentiments of alienation, and we need to link all that to a historiography that traces how polities and clans emerged after the decline of Great Zimbabwe and how people lived – who moved where, and how her clans, their own oral poetry and memory fit into the bigger picture.

She would enter the university system already an African.

Second, it would have meant that what the current Minister of Higher Education is trying to achieve at university level would have been deepened, and would have become the mainstay of the Basic Education system.

The fact that she could compose and play with at least two languages is not to be taken for granted. The fact that there could have been such dexterity in her schooling system presupposes a generation of teachers that would know not only their periodic table but would also have been schooled in creative writing – and would know that the fact that one is born Greek or South African does not make one a Homer or a Plaatje.

Third, for her to have been exposed to Others and have understood that which is wonder-full in Others at university presupposes seriously Afropolitan and cosmopolitan spaces where the Gandhian metaphors of appreciating the Other’s “wonders” can be concretised without losing one’s integrity. It would have meant a depth of scholarship in Humanities and Social Sciences which would have

overcome the classifications of race and ethnicity, and their deep historical and oppressive roots.

Fourth, it would have meant that despite her aptitude for mathematics and science she would have a thirst for culture, and a capacity to seek the roots of what has been a powerful contribution to a transatlantic African sense of the aesthetic and the sublime: to understand Aimé Césaire fully would have meant reading him in French, and to do so would have presupposed an Africa-wide system for student mobility in which the colonial divides of francophone, lusophone and anglophone Africa had melted away.

It presupposes an African Renaissance.

Fifth, in terms of her own aeronautical flight she would be able to think of a world that was about the South (Hyderabad) or the North (Stanford) or the Far East (Beijing). It would presuppose a new global geography and an ability to be unafraid of boundaries, and a system that allowed for trans-cultural competence.

Sixth, it would connect her to the Nando Cycles, which are not some cheap tourist-linked gimmick. They were the songs of the clans of ironmongers and smiths of the areas from the Soutpansberg to the Limpopo, the secret songs of their craft and their apprenticeship. They were not just songs, they were ways through which “know-hows” about the craft of iron-working were passed on from generation to generation. She would be expected to be a sophisticated engineer of metals in days to come, and it would not be strange for her to appreciate their importance in the university seminars of tomorrow.

Seventh, as a woman engineer she would be the exemplar of our constitutional integrity. It would have taken a revolution in the Humanities and the Social Sciences of South Africa to get her to that point. Excellence would be a precondition for this.

This Charter is about that precondition.

It means that the Apartheid past, the racial segregation of institutions, their inequality and their blots on the integrity of our scholarship have receded into a regrettable and never-to-be repeated past.

Part of the process of developing the Charter and its recommendations meant taking a serious look at ourselves.

The Task Team, its Reference Group and our constituency had to dig deep. What was it about our contribution to a broader humanistic scholarship that resonated, that made us feel proud?

What stood out in our encounters with the international community is that we have exercised the world’s moral imagination: whether it was the scholarship of the apartheid period, or of the transition and the immediate post-apartheid period, our work has provided a calculus of self-understanding for issues relating to social justice, anti-racism and reconciliation everywhere. In which way can we sustain such a powerful presence in the world of knowledge and self-understanding?

Part of the moral challenge came from the transgressive, religion-linked contribution that has its roots in the colonial past of “heretics” like Colenso or Shembe, or the interdenominational thrust of an anti-apartheid stance that has revolutionised thinking and scholarship elsewhere.

We learned how important our contribution has also been in terms of musicality, performance and art – from the Guggenheim in New York to the Art and Drama Schools of Delhi. We discovered how seriously our writers, poets and dramatists are taken everywhere, but increasingly on our continent and in the Global South – and how effective they have been in dealing with landscape, land, pain and discord.

We have been made aware of how important Gandhian and neo-Gandhian scholarship has been in the last twenty years, despite the images we project as warriors, militarists and revolutionaries.

The fact finally, that the black and African majority were deemed to be hewers of wood, drillers of rock and haulers of water in the apartheid design, and that even before that the existence of the reserves, compounds and hostels, to borrow from the work of John Rex (1976), was part of the most ingenious system of labour exploitation yet devised, and the fact that this mass of humanity produced some of the most fascinating movements in recent history and a New Labour Studies that is being emulated elsewhere, made us rather confident.

The potential was there for a sturdy Humanities and a sturdy Social Sciences scholarship. There was no doubt in our minds that they could enrich the quality of all of the

fields of inquiry and education, if and only if they themselves were robust, honest, challenging and committed to enabling graduates to possess a quality of mind to respond to any socio-economic pressure and demand.

That they were and are a vital component in the higher education system in South Africa, and a crucial platform for the development of a value system beyond racism, derogation and oppression, needs no further comment.

After our encounters with more than a thousand colleagues in all the institutions of higher learning, and interested parties in government and civil society, we are convinced that Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) scholarship can be a repository of heritage, history, memory and meaning as this society strives for peace, prosperity, security and socio-economic well-being.

These fields of scholarship are an archive of noble and ignoble ideas of equality and inequality, justice and injustice, and stand as a constant monitor of our achievements and failures.

They are the custodian of indigenous and endogenous languages, of cultural formations lost and re-created in the striving for the disenfranchised majority to construct an African modernity, proud of its past and mindful of its historical entanglements.

They are the welcoming home of ideas, concepts, cultures and languages from the rest of this globalising planet, and a key filter of the diverse interactions and dignity needed to create a pacific world.

After careful consideration and analysis we have arrived at a series of recommendations based on what we feel are very sound principles.

We therefore argue that if the Task Team's recommendations are implemented, we can envision that by 2030 the Humanities and the Social Sciences in our tertiary system will be an epicentre of scholarship, pedagogy, community practice and social responsibility in Africa.

We also envision that our institutions and our academic community will be an equal partner in the world's knowledge production and dissemination alongside centres

of excellence in the North and the Global South.

In cognisance, too, of the fact that the tertiary education and research system is central to the social and economic evolution of societies, we shall be recommending ways through which our system could be a vital co-agent of change.

All the above – being a dynamic epicentre on the continent, being partners in global initiatives and being a key energy centre for ideas of progress and change – are central to our vision. We are heartened that CODESRIA would like to see this process evolving into a Pan-African Charter for the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

Here the creative, imaginative, critical and analytical qualities that the fields of the Humanities and the Social Sciences bring to science and to social and individual well-being have a major role to play alongside natural science and technological capacities.

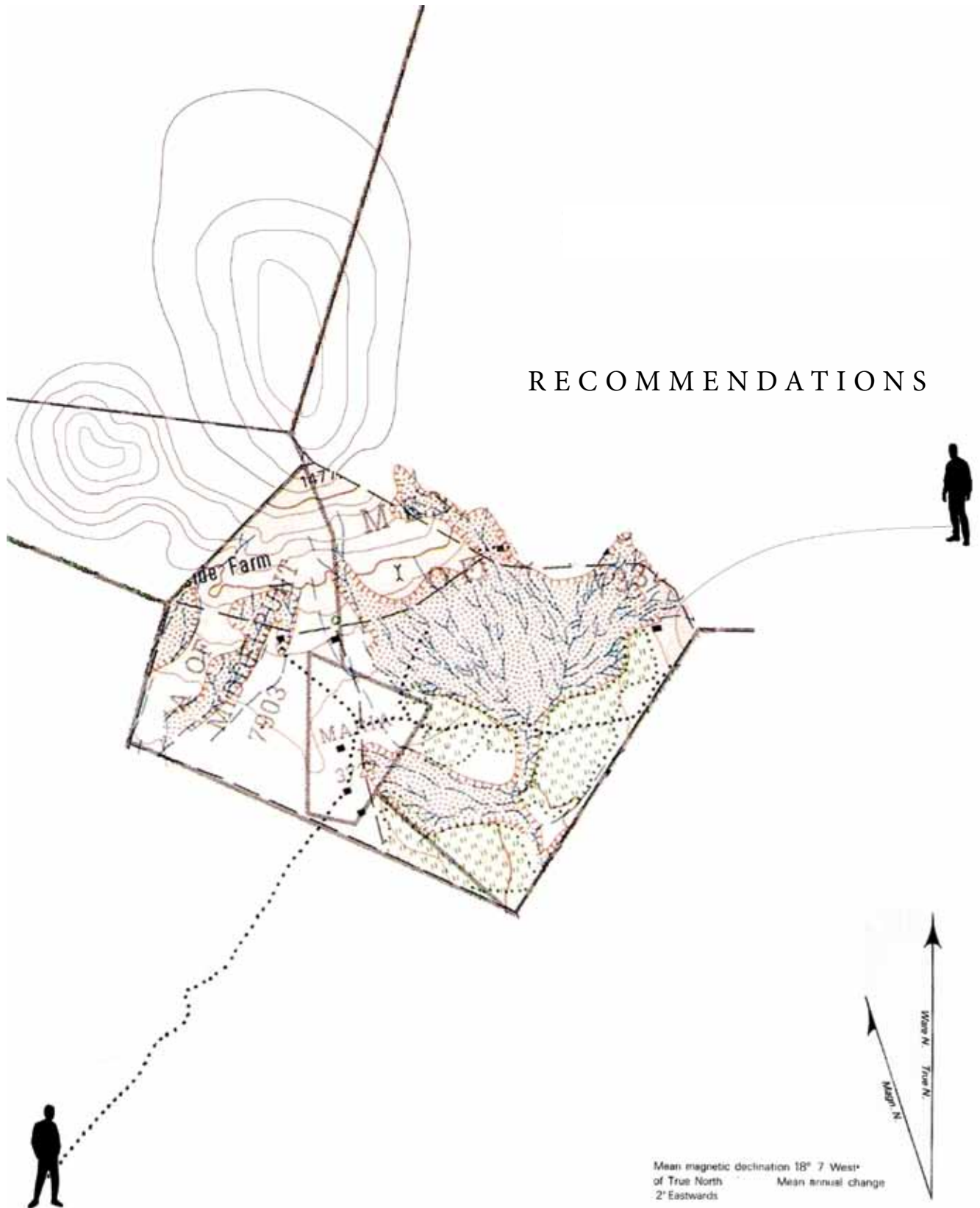
These qualities (the creative, imaginative, critical and analytical capacities) have to be nurtured in all graduates of our post-secondary education system, including the further education and training system, the intermediary institutions we will be proposing and the variegated university system in the country. As much as it would be wonderful, as Immanuel Wallerstein has argued, to have space for a curriculum of Physics for Poets<sup>1</sup>, it would be equally pleasing to have a curriculum of Poetics for Physicists and Physicists.

The nurturing and generation of such capacities as we are proposing is not in contrast and/or opposition to the worlds of Techno-Science, but in dialogue with them. All students have to acquire an understanding of the social, the symbolic and the implications of the recent scientific revolutions – the digital, the genetic and the eco-centric ones. But it is equally vital that they all learn about the social revolutions of which we are a recent, uncompromising and proud heir.

In the words of Julius Nyerere (1978: 27), "the ideas imparted by education, or released in the mind through education, should therefore be liberating ideas; the skills acquired by education should be liberating skills. Nothing else can properly be called education. Teaching which induces a slave mentality or a sense of impotence is not education at all."

<sup>1</sup> At the CHSS International Workshop, University of Johannesburg, Bunting Road Campus, 2–3 June 2011.

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## THE PROPOSALS / RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. We propose six key interventions which will occur in two phases – Phase 1: 2012–2015, Phase 2: 2015–2018: The formation of an Academy/Institute/Entity of Humanities and Social Sciences which will be the special purpose institution used to dynamise the fields of inquiry through five primarily virtual Schools in the first phase (2012-2015) and four such Schools in the second phase (2015-2018), each located in a designated province.
- b. The creation of an African Renaissance Programme which will be a continent-wide version of programmes like the Socrates and Erasmus Programmes in the European Union.
- c. The formation of a National Centre for Lifelong Education and Educational Opportunities to generate and preserve equity, employability and access.
- d. The consolidation of six Catalytic Projects during the first phase (2012-2015) that will animate the fields of the HSS.
- e. The creation of the frameworks and new formulae necessary for the integrity of the fields/disciplines of study.
- f. The implementation of 14 Corrective Interventions during Phase I to overcome once and for all the perceived crisis in the current landscape of scholarship.
- way across the planet, for reasons that have to do with structural changes in the global economy, new divisions of labour between regions, and new forms of knowledge production, innovation and dissemination.
- Nevertheless the national implications of these proposals, as we shall describe them here and in the Implementation Plan section of this report, will be transformative and far-reaching.
- We will not be recommending an increase in the proportion of new HSS students from the current 40 per cent of the overall student population. This is a matter that should preoccupy government, the university system and its various stakeholders on an annual basis. What we would be striving to improve are existing numbers of students in the key areas necessary for realising our vision.
- The implementation of such proposals will involve redefining the landscape of institutions in the country, as well as the relationship between higher education, science and technology, and in turn the relationship of these to research, teaching, social responsiveness and heritage.
- It will define, too, the parameters of a systemic differentiation that rewards institutions in a new way, as opposed to the uniformity of the current dispensation.
- It will most certainly strive to accelerate the equity demands of our democracy.

### The content of the proposals

The Task Team is mindful that in trying to correct the performance trajectory of the Humanities and the Social Sciences it has to bring to focus the university system as a whole, because scholarship and its management are deeply relational.

Similarly, in addressing problems and dilemmas that are pock-marking the national landscape we are cognisant of the fact that we are reflecting on processes under

### A. The Academy/Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences

Noting that there is an urgent need to address the perceived crisis and the real imbalances in the tertiary education system vis-à-vis the fields of the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) we recommend that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) initiate a process to:

A.1 Establish an Academy/Institute whose role will be to enhance scholarship, research and ethical practice in the fields of HSS. This would, inter alia, involve advising

government departments and any other stakeholders on issues affecting the HSS in the country. The Academy/Institute will then be responsible for the following recommended interventions:

A.2 Establish a national mentoring programme involving distinguished Emeriti who would undertake some supervision of Master's and PhD students. Visiting professors from the African diaspora and other countries of the South would be asked to be available for a short time to contribute their knowledge and experience to the programme.

A.3 Establish, in the first phase, five Virtual Schools that concentrate the scholarship of 150 PhD students in vital areas of HSS. Four of the Virtual Schools would be: Josiah Gumede School in Gauteng (Key Challenges in the Global Economy, Race, Culture and Identity, Development Challenges in Africa, Labour and Livelihoods in African Cities); the Reuben Caluza School in KwaZulu-Natal (Key Areas of Performance and Creative Scholarship); the AC Jordan School in the Western Cape (Key Areas of the Symbolic, Signification and South African and African Literature in a Globalising World); the Govan Mbeki School in the Eastern Cape (Community and Experiential Learning, Mother Tongue Language and Rural Transformation). There is a fifth Virtual School that would focus on African Languages (we await the report on this of the Task Team for African Languages). These will be increased to nine Schools in the second phase. Doctoral students will continue to be registered with supervisors in the existing university system; what the Virtual Schools will be doing is providing excellent exposure of their student clusters to methodology, establishing challenging seminar series, and striving to create a community of scholarship among supervisors and scholars which distils the best methods gleaned through such donor-driven PhD programmes as those inaugurated by the South Africa-Netherlands Research Programme on Alternatives in Development SANPAD, the Mellon Foundation and, increasingly, the National Research Foundation (NRF) Chairs. (See the Implementation Plan section

A.4 Host and place 100 postgraduate students (Master's and PhD) per year from other African countries and other developing societies, who will be studying in our country

in key areas of the HSS, as part of the African Renaissance Development Programme discussed below. In addition, students already in the system will need to be identified and supported where necessary.

A.5 Create a national committee that will work actively (in consultation with national professional associations) on the recognition of South African and other relevant journals by the "authorising" and accrediting centres of the international scholarly community.

A.6 Create a national panel that will review submitted books and recommend or refuse to recommend their accreditation.

A.7 Establish a committee that will review performance contributions and recommend or refuse to recommend their recognition for accreditation.

A.8. Establish a committee that will review the performance contributions of practice-linked knowledge in development initiatives.

A.9 Establish a committee that will review the quality of international collaborative programmes and advise the Council on Higher Education (CHE) on them.

A.10 Establish a National Forum that will organise an annual encounter on innovations in digitality and distance education.

A.11 Establish an Innovation Forum and hold an annual workshop with all the academics who have received Distinguished Teaching Awards to reflect on and disseminate pedagogic achievements and excellence

A.12 Facilitate the process of gathering together and making available and easily accessible research and other data related to the HSS in South Africa by an existing body responsible for such (for example the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) or the CHE).

A.13 Review the mandates and responsibilities of existing quality control bodies, identifying gaps and weaknesses where these exist, and assuming such responsibilities as



may be appropriate and/or supporting existing institutions in fulfilling their mandates.

## **B. The African Renaissance Programme**

Noting that future scholarship cannot be based on a closed and everlasting definition of 'the African' or a definition of Africa that accepts the heritage of the Berlin Conference during the High Imperial era of the late 19th century, but rather needs to strive for an open and dynamic process through which African scholars cooperate, collaborate and help each other reflect on the past, present and future of this continent, we propose an ambitious and extroverted African Renaissance Programme.

Noting too that such a reflection cannot occur in isolation from Africa's key interactions with the rest of the world, as Africa has never been a bounded unit throughout ancient or more recent history, and therefore demands a deeply relational understanding of its emergence and consolidation;

Noting further the necessity that such a reflective and innovative theory-building process around the human and social condition of and on the continent, and their relation to nature and other sentient beings – in terms of heritage, culture, history, aesthetics, sociology, anthropology, ecology and all possible fields – should also be critically unravelling the heritage of authoritarianism, colonialism and the rule of race;

Noting that CODESRIA, since 1966, and the African Union have been and are striving for student-centred mobility on the continent and deeper interactions between African scholars, we propose the following three dimensions of an African Renaissance Programme:

B.1 That the Academy/Institute proposed in Section A above establish a Pan-African consortium of universities to initiate a programme in which African students at Honours and Master's level in HSS can study for a semester across national boundaries in Africa. The establishment of this consortium should occur in Phase I.

B.2 That the Academy/Institute establish, within the mandates of BRICS and IBSA agreements, a broader range

of cross-border study programmes during the Phase 2.

B.3 That the Academy/Institute establish the framework for joint degrees in the HSS, and especially in design-related fields at the universities of technology, within SADC in the first phase, and in other African countries beyond SADC in the second phase.

B.4 That the Academy/Institute support the formation within each Virtual School of collaborative clusters of theory-building laboratories that involve scholars from across the continent (see Implementation Plan section).

## **C. The National Centre for Lifelong Education and Educational Opportunities**

Noting the effort to improve access, redress, articulation and quality in the education system as a whole and ensure an enduring and lifelong system of opportunities;

Noting too that HSS graduates are the most vulnerable in times of economic fluctuation, stagnation and crisis, and the need for managing and monitoring the experiences and life-chances of these graduates;

Noting further that failure to acknowledge experiential learning and to implement formal systems for the recognition of prior learning remains a serious blockage in the lives of our potential scholars;

Noting also that many of our fields of study are striving to make workplace internships key to the qualification process, beyond the professional fields in the Social Sciences;

We propose the formation of a National Centre for Lifelong Education and Educational Opportunities, whose aims will be:

C.1 To keep a database in the National Learners' Records Database (NLRD) in collaboration with the Departments of Higher Education and Training and Basic Education, the Quality Councils, the Planning Commission, the Department of Labour and other key NQF and research organisations, in order to manage and monitor the experience and life chances of unemployed graduates, including matriculants and graduates of FET and HET institutions; and to ensure that this monitoring includes

tracking of people who are: (1) unemployed; (2) employed but not in disciplines and fields in which they have been trained; and (3) employed in disciplines and fields in which they have been trained.

C.2 To establish a virtual institution in collaboration with SAQA (where existing institutions authorise a single coordinating institution) to address the gap between the FET and HET systems, such that: (1) the gaps within and between the two systems are articulated clearly; (2) the relationship between disbursement of funds and achievements is monitored; (3) the progression of learners through the systems is monitored; (4) developments are based on national articulation and lifelong learning policies, and on existing and new articulation-related initiatives; (5) intra- and inter-institutional partnerships are encouraged and facilitated.

C.3 To facilitate, support and drive existing and new initiatives towards the provision of 'matriculation equivalents' in education and training – whereby learners are exposed to appropriate workplace experience at all levels where necessary.

C.4 To support the National Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Strategy and initiatives, including Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT), and coordinate RPL and CAT-related support for FET and HET institutions, including providing: (1) clear guidance for resourcing RPL and CAT, effective delivery of RPL and CAT, and quality assurance of RPL and CAT; and (2) promoting common understandings of RPL and CAT.

C.5 To establish, monitor and research the existence and success rates of internship programmes in collaboration with all institutions offering such programmes and with employment organisations, in relation to internship graduates at all levels (FET, HET undergraduate and HET postgraduate). All internships must be accredited and credit-bearing. Monitoring the relationship between these internships and further study and work must be included in these tracking activities.

#### **D. Catalytic Projects**

After careful mapping through our consultative exercise we

have identified a number of gaps that are at the heart of the problem of failure to achieve collective appropriation of place, of past, of language, of culture and of people, of history and of geography – and the addressing of which could be of vital importance in the first phase of implementation.

Noting that a "catalyst" has to produce benefits to the research project for the higher education system, and indeed for society as a whole, by dynamising the fields, the disciplines and interdisciplinary work; by increasing the capacity to research further and theorise better, and by contributing to the raising of our status in the global academic commons;

Noting too that research on contemporary forms of class, race and gender inequality is well-served in the existing system and will continue to receive research support in the future;

We propose the following six catalytic projects:

D.1 A national project to construct, through all available scholarly means, a history of broader South Africa from the 11th to the 16th century. Such a team should include, for example, historians, archaeologists, linguists, geneticists and other specialists, and must lay the foundation for all ensuing research. This historiography of Southern Africa is largely non-existent at present.

D.2 A national multidisciplinary project on how indigenous languages in South Africa could support the process of concept formation in the HSS, and furthermore, what know-hows in these languages could enrich social scientific thinking or pedagogy.

D.3 A national project to recover the traditions of popular education in the country, and to identify the key methodological innovations in educational practices in South Africa that can contribute to a broader world of educational interactions.

D.4 The establishment of five Humanities Hubs that are not only centres of heritage but are also centres of ongoing research, documentation of know-hows, oral stories and

poetry, knowledge production, student internship and education. Where elements of these hubs already exist, they will be boosted. The local university system will be the custodian of these hubs, linked to heritage sites. There will be one at the Greater St Lucia Wetlands Park in KwaZulu-Natal; one on the Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape which, in the long term, will be looked after by the University of the Northern Cape; one in Limpopo linked to the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape; one on Robben Island; and one in the area related to the Origin of the Human Species in Gauteng. Phase Two will extend such hubs to all provinces.

D.5 A national multidisciplinary research project on the Social Sources of Creativity which should explore how these sources are created and sustained in performance, music, dance, photography and other creative fields – that is, what elements enhance, shape and influence the wealth of grassroots talent and what constrains it. This will be vital not only for the long-term study of cultural formations and social change, but also for arts and culture policy, educational policy and conservation.

D.6 A project that recovers the lineages of knowledge production from the 1950s to the 1980s, to bring to light unpublished theses, manuscripts, academic and scholarly texts, as well as personal diaries, oral archives and field-notes in the HSS, and to bring them into the academic mainstream. Whilst proper archiving of such material would be important, so would the production of a number of e-publications or an omnibus edition of key works in HSS fields.

### **E. Integrity-linked Interventions**

Noting that there is a considerable criticism of the existing reward system, and that it is perceived to create a major impediment to the success of the HSS fields of study, we propose three integrity-linked interventions:

E.1 A Review of the Funding Formula: That the South African Humanities Deans' Association prepare an input to the Ministerial Committee for the Review of the Funding

of Universities led by Mr Cyril Ramaphosa's committee that takes cognisance of the Task Team's recommendation that adjustments will be necessary. Such adjustments as we recommend will be discussed during this workshop. We are seeking a more nuanced formula that balances actual costs and variation.

E.2 A Review of the Reward System: That the Deans' Association in the Humanities and the Professional Associations take cognisance of the Task Team's recommendation for a review of the reward system for research productivity (implications of this are discussed in the next section of this document). Here book manuscripts, chapters in books, performance and sustainable community practices will gain more recognition.

E.3 A Review of the NRF: We recommend the establishment of a bifurcated structure for the NRF – a National Science and Technology Research Foundation and a National Humanities and Social Sciences Research Foundation. This would avoid the reduction of the reward structure to a formula suitable only for Natural Scientific Excellence. By implication we recommend a Review of the NRF which recognises the importance of the Chair initiative and of Blue Skies Research, but points to concerns about the appropriateness of existing categories for evaluation. In addition, funding for research conducted outside South Africa needs to be considered.

### **F. 14 Corrective Interventions**

After careful consultation with all public tertiary institutions in the country we have mapped 20 problem areas. After two workshops with field-related experts we have identified 14 corrective interventions that are needed in the first phase of implementation if the imbalances and crises in the system are to be redressed:

F.1 A National First-Year Improvement Project to be implemented. This would entail: ring-fenced allocation of funding to the tertiary sector to ensure a tutorial system with an automatic ratio of 1 tutor:20 students everywhere; that no programme/ major-equivalent offering involve

fewer than 5 academics; that there is a working and up-to-date computer for every 10 students; and that each computer is linked to journal-based e-library systems.

F.2 The Student Loan Fund (NSFAS) to be expanded to cover all students studying in the system, and does not discriminate against HSS students in any field. Funding needs to be made available at the time of registration, and needs to cover the full costs of the study programme.

F.3 Annual growth of HSS intakes to be closely monitored by the existing institutions, in consultation with the National Centre for Lifelong Education and Educational Opportunities.

F.4 The scholarship/bursary system favouring Master's students to be extended to Honours students.

F.5 The scholarship/bursary schemes for Master's and PhD students to be increased by 30 per cent. This could be facilitated by mandating that third-stream funding provided on a tax-deductible basis by corporate entities be used only for academic and not for administrative purposes.

F.6 A review of all qualifications to be undertaken, where this has not yet occurred, in conjunction with SAQA and the CHE: FET diplomas (for critical literacy); BA (for mother tongue teaching proficiencies); BA, BSocSci and BTech (Creative) for embedding the principles of the Charter; and all other degrees for the mainstreaming of critical, social and deep literacy and hermeneutic capacities in the curriculum.

F.7 The 4-year degree to be re-visited, and be reconfigured to follow a model of a foundation/bridging year + three-year degree OR a three-year degree + Honours year. (To offset possible increases in costs, mandatory community work is suggested; examples of this would be tutoring undergraduates; teaching in townships; working in writing centres; working in entrepreneurship centres; or making the final year of the degree programme focus on a cross-disciplinary project for teams of students.

F.8 Legislation to be amended to facilitate joint degrees, where these involve cross-institutional collaboration between two or more institutions on an agreed-upon basis. Joint degrees will be considered by a Joint Degrees Committee consisting of staff from the Humanities Entity, SAQA, and the CHE, where these individuals are nationally and internationally recognised in their fields.

F.9 A Higher Education Irregularities Committee (HEIC) to be established, led by the CHE, and comprising members from the CHE and other key NQF organisations. The HEIC will be the higher education counterpart of the FET Irregularities Committee led by Umalusi. Its role will be to detect and receive reports on irregularities within higher education, and address all of these irregularities. Irregularities can be reported by academics at all levels, and by students at HEIs, and could include matters such as misuse of intellectual property, supervisory overload, student neglect etc.

F.10 There is a need to provide a fund for the Deans' Association and the Education Deans' Forum (EDF) to create a well-integrated system of Diversity and Race, Gender and Xenophobia Thinking workshops. But funds also need to be allocated to ensure that diversity issues are mainstreamed in the undergraduate curriculum.

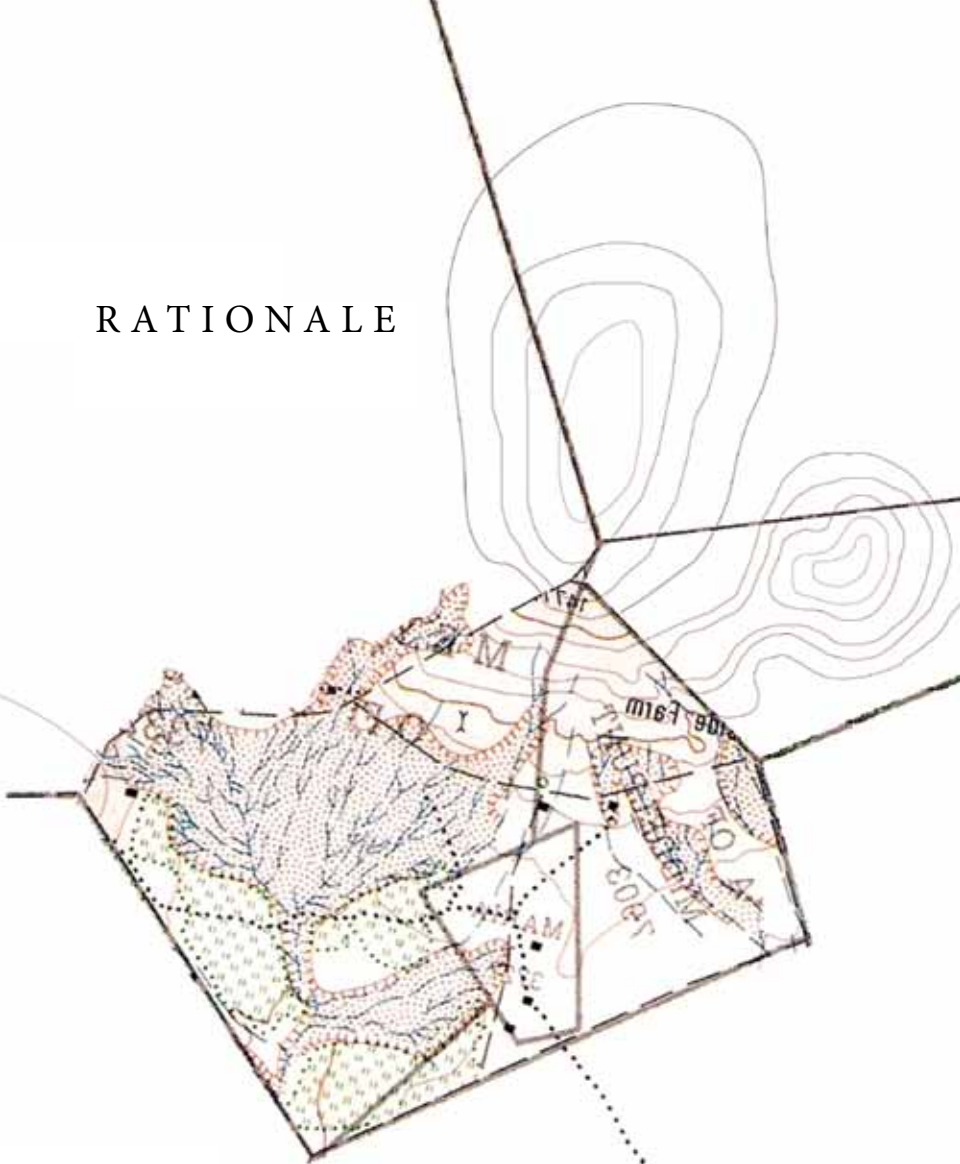
F.11 The number of NRF Research Chairs to be increased in the areas identified as key in the Charter.

F.12 We support the HESA initiative to redress institutional salary inequalities, the attempt to bring academic remuneration in line with the public Sector and its New Generation proposals to achieve excellence and equity.

F.13 The DHET and SAQA to initiate Memoranda of Understanding for Research Pacts between national, provincial and local governments, the Human Sciences Research Council and the university system.

F.14 An Academic Bill of rights and responsibilities to be drawn up.

# RATIONALE



## RATIONALE FOR HSS RECOMMENDATIONS

In drafting a Charter for the Humanities and Social Sciences in South Africa in 2011 the concern was not to drown in the flood of existing problems, not to stop at the concern with redress so necessary to wipe out the legacies of our apartheid past, but to also provide a vision and an architecture that must be adequate for the future.

Our reference group was quite explicit about our mandate: after a careful examination of the problems and needs in the fields concerned, the Charter should create a powerful, positive, affirmative statement on the humanities and social sciences; it should emphasise the role of the humanities in creating responsible, ethical citizens; it had to define a post-apartheid trajectory of scholarship sensitive to our immediate and long-term developmental needs as a key society in Africa and the "Global South"; it had to be aspirational, but it should nevertheless serve as a clear road map for intervention with the means at our disposal.

The problem areas were plenty: we enumerated 20 of them in consultation with anyone who volunteered their effort in the country, and each area contained some toxicity and a serious hazard. After careful thought, workshops and expert advice we grouped them into six clusters, sought advice from our international reference group to help us understand remedial solutions and best practices, tested their limits, but realised, as often happens to Task Teams, that if we work inductively from the problem areas identified we tend to remain trapped by them.

To rise to the challenge we decided to become bolder and start drafting a set of recommendations that we thought, and still think, go a long way towards redressing the past, deal with the present and prefigure a system that can make a serious contribution to the pedagogy, research and scholarship of the future. Yet if the apartheid past is a harsh weight on the shoulders of the living, to paraphrase a German philosopher and revolutionary of note, the present, we found, was harsher, and the harshest still was to try and understand the importance of the HSS for the future.

To do such thinking in the context of a dynamic and volatile world system, where ecological and socio-economic

upheavals seem to be increasingly the norm rather than the exception as the system moves towards more planetary integration and convergence, whilst at the same time it polarises around issues of inequality and identity, is an onerous task.

Yet there are a few trends that are robust enough to warrant serious consideration; these are related to the increasing demographic and political importance of urban agglomerations relative to agrarian territories. The need to create liveable and creative cities, as opposed to a planet of slums, will be magnified, but so will the pressure on agrarian territories to feed them. Both processes will occur under conditions of a life-or-death imperative to green all aspects of energy production and consumption.

There will be severe strains in the relationship between societies and other sentient beings within human reach, given human dominance on the planet. There will be a multiplication of hazards and epidemics that make the design of institutions of confinement an anachronism; there will be a severe pressure on the bureaucratic forms of control and regulation that have defined modernity.

There will be a rapid dissemination and integration of technologies based on the digital, genetic and eco-centric scientific revolutions, with unfathomable implications for human communication, performance and ritual, for the production, circulation and consumption of goods and the reproduction of the species.

There will be severe pressures for equity at all levels of the social body, despite polarisation in the possession of real or symbolic goods. Most certainly the 21st century will encounter the consequences of gender equality, which will affect the core of sociality itself. There will also be a high demand for inter-cultural competence, as borders lose some of their barbed wire and as diverse claims are made for the sociality of living and working spaces.

All the above will affect the university system, its role, its function and the way it goes about enhancing society's creative and productive powers. And, as Africa's and South

Africa's knowledge project is intricately entangled with the broader processes of knowledge creation, research and dissemination, so will our system's role and function change and diversify.

South Africa, in this context of pressures and challenges, has four clear domains of strength that can energise its responses: it has significant biodiversities that are of a global significance and can serve as a platform for an environmentally sound development trajectory; it has the traces of the first human footprints on earth, which can speak to the rest of the world of a heritage way back in the mists of time; it has an economy that has a serious productive and distributional base with important areas of knowledge concentration; it has a revolutionary heritage of radical equality and freedom which, since 1994, has had the opportunity of consigning racism and manifold forms of derogation, exclusion and domination to a regrettable historical past.

South Africa also has four clear domains of entropy and possible fragmentation: it has one of the most dangerous patterns of life chance and income inequality in the world, a pattern threaded through with race and gender overtones; it has demonstrated some of the most extreme forms of violence against and abuse of women and children in the most intimate spaces of sociality; it has one of the weakest basic education systems on the African continent and high rates of youth unemployment, with volatile gang and gang-related cultural formations; and finally, its elites, predominantly white and increasingly black, are prone to predation and demonstrate an alarming lack of social responsibility.

Finally, our serious academics share with many of our colleagues on this continent the search to re-evaluate the integrity of the historical past, the normative prowess and the dilemmas it involved, and to define a dignified, post-imperial and post-colonial relationship to the world of knowledge.

In our encounters it was quite clear that the original intention was not to damage, impair or destroy the HSS fields of study. When the first post-apartheid steps were taken in organising the pedagogy and research required

by the country's tertiary education system, there was an urgent need to respond to what appeared to be a vital demand: as Manuel Castells had written in 1998 and repeated in 2000, "in the last quarter of this fading century, a technological revolution, centred around information, has transformed the way we think, we produce, we consume, we trade, we manage, we communicate, we live, we die, we make war, and we make love. A dynamic, global economy has been constituted around the planet, linking up valuable people and activities from all over the world, while switching off from the networks of power and wealth, people and territories dubbed as irrelevant from the perspective of dominant interests" (Castells 1998: 1).

Being de-linked, "switched-off" or disconnected from this world was deemed to be hubris-like because of its consequences: Manuel Castells elaborated quite a harrowing narrative of the prospects for those who were condemned to remain in a "fourth world", of the new excluded, of the digital divide; and South Africa's response to this narrative was that for us to be sinking into the "black holes of informational capitalism" was unthinkable – the need to avoid this fate at all costs a non-negotiable goal. For many who demanded a move away from Afro-pessimism, the imperative became to save ourselves from ourselves. The consequence was a policy framework that prioritised the sciences and technology, one that attempted to steer the Academy towards powering-up economic growth.

The ASSAf Report highlights the process through which this decision was institutionalised following OECD innovation protocols, and has come to define the architecture of research funding and, by implication, scholarly endeavour in the country. What is obvious now, after encounters with the International Social Science Council and with UNESCO, is that the OECD's very science-centric innovation instruments do not constitute frameworks for scientific policy in any one of the European Union's governments; rather, they constitute a research, monitoring and evaluation instrument which is used to establish the degree of technological intensity and progress in each one.

It has been argued that as a consequence of this approach to innovation, the importance of HSS has been downplayed in the country, its scholarship ignored and its contribution marginalised.

This is reflected in the government's bias in its existing funding formula, and the bias towards what John Higgins (2010) has termed a STEM model (Science, Technology, Engineering and Management) for rewarding research productivity – a model that is insensitive to HSS scholarship.

There is a vibrant critique of the implications of this singular emphasis and there is a growing critique of the implications of the "corporatisation" of higher education in the world system as a whole.

Over and above the effects both have had on the humanities and the social sciences, there is a growing alarmism about the "University in Ruins" and within that, an emerging sub-motif of the humanities "in ruin". There is a generalised theme of "decline", of a past lost, of a prior integrity sacrificed on the altar of market fundamentalism. This did not sit comfortably with the Task Team or our reference group, which perfectly understood and collected narratives of a crisis but could not find anything like a golden past in apartheid South Africa's HSS to cling to. It did find pockets of excellence and the critical scholarship Dr Blade Nzimande alluded to in his speech on the occasion of the launch of the Charter project, but they were a powerful exception rather than the rule. We took seriously the injunction by Prof. Premesh Lalu that to develop a Charter on the "defence" of the HSS we would have to be careful of what was being defended.

As John Crowley, our UNESCO participant and guest, emphasised, the challenge was not "a matter of going back to a traditional model of excellence and defending it; it is emphatically a matter of imagining a new model and bringing it into existence... For better for worse, of course, the work of imagination, the work of bringing new things into the world, i.e. the work of the Humanities, is not inherently progressive or subversive or radical, or on the right or in this case, left side of history. Among the new things that have been brought into existence by the work of the moral imagination have been racism, Nazism, fascism, genocide."

It demands a critical engagement with the past and an understanding of what forms of excellence, dignity and

relevance are appropriate for a dynamic and globalising world. In this, as was mentioned in our final workshop, "we need more than engineers to build the roads between us". There is, furthermore, an enduring perception that overall funding for higher education has declined and the shrinkage of budgets has affected the work of tertiary institutions. Although it is true that many tertiary institutions have been in financial crisis, and it was a sobering exercise listening to how these crises were being handled during our fact-finding institutional visits, expenditure on higher education has been increasing at an average higher than South Africa's annual economic growth, higher than the inflation rate which has been at 4.7 per cent per annum since 1996. In fact it has been increasing at 9.1 per cent per annum during the same period.

However, it became obvious through our discussions during our fact-gathering visits that most of the decisions about budgetary allocations are internal to the executive and council structures of individual institutions. It was also observed that, no matter what the formula enumerates, most funding of departments and programmes has followed an historical logic of providing more or less what was allocated "last year". What is true, though, is that many decisions to squeeze the HSS over funding were justified in terms of the priorities of national policy.

The problems with the funding formula are close to the DHET's deliberations, as Dr Blade Nzimande told Prof. Peter Vale in their discussion published in the Mail and Guardian (Vale 2010): "There are... criticisms of the funding formula, the most important of which, in my opinion, is that it is not possible to build a differentiated higher-education system (which we want) with an undifferentiated funding formula. The current formula is the same for traditional universities, universities of technology and comprehensive universities and applies equally to research-rich institutions and to those that devote a greater proportion of their efforts to undergraduate teaching."

The consequence of decisions relating to the importance of the HSS was to create serious imbalances within institutions and between them. It is obvious that the weak



have got weaker and the strong have become stronger. Furthermore, institutions responded to developmental priorities and their own provincial and spatial contexts (urban and rural) by creating a diverse landscape.

What is obvious, too, after our fact-finding visits is also reflected in the audits undertaken by the CHE – there is a vast differentiation in the system, despite the attempt at achieving national uniformity. Whether this is a positive turn or a distortion of policy intentions in the fields under our consideration is a point for further discussion.

A very positive finding that emerged from the fact-finding visits was that what Saleem Badat has warned about – that there is “a dearth of intellectual spaces in South Africa for sustained scholarly debate on critical issues in higher education” (Badat 2010) – is being reversed, and we encountered serious self-reflection and creative responses to challenges on many of our visits. But we also encountered a number of contexts that were dysfunctional, unprofessional and disturbing.

The only way to address such challenges is to rise above them and find a new space to dynamise and invigorate the entire terrain of scholarship. We explicate below the specific interventions we recommend. To do this we follow the structure suggested in the previous section, starting with the need for the establishment of an Academy/Institute of the Humanities and Social Science.

### **A. The Academy/Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences**

A.1. We strongly believe that the establishment of an Academy and/or an Institute is vital. Before arriving at such a conception we exercised our minds seriously on the question of how to improve the existing system without complicating it further.

It was obvious – and it is obvious to anyone who does not have vested interests in the status quo – that left as it is to play itself out, the existing system will increase inequalities within institutions and between them, will strengthen the

small number of institutions that are doing well within existing parameters, will not solve the current problems we have encountered, and will lead to serious inertia and, despite the presence of good and serious people at the chalk-face, mediocrity.

An Academy, if introduced into this context, will instil status and gravity in the educational landscape and will be a high-order entity which will have to co-exist with the Academy of Science, and play a catalytic role in the welfare of the HSS fields.

There are enticing examples of an Academy's operations and prestige in the European, the Chinese and the Indian systems that can add to our understanding, beyond the model of the British system. There is also the example of the Academy of Science in the Netherlands that is more pluralistic in its approach, and plays a direct role in the enhancement of the HSS.

An Institute, by contrast, would be more hands-on, less concerned with status and prestige, and would exist as a dynamising centre, but it would have to be housed/hosted within the existing landscape. (See Implementation Plan section for ideas on institutional design.)

Our colleague, Dr Ebrima Sall from CODESRIA, seasoned by now in the struggle for higher education reform on the continent, observed that “there's got to be an outside force which functions as a stimulator; as a driver; as a facilitator; as a proponent to the outside world and to the inside of the institution – essentially as a lever to move these changes forward, to press for them. They won't happen by themselves, they can't, there's got to be an outside force and no individual university can take this on – there's got to be a third force, if you'll pardon the expression, that plays this role of moving this agenda forward.”

Whatever the final decision – and we as a Task Team favour the Academy route – we envision the leanest possible organisational form, as both an Academy and an Institute will act as conduits for innovative and novel activities within the existing system.

A.2. Distinguished Professors in the HSS fields, whilst making way for a new generation in their institutions at retirement age, can remain productive and creative, and help to mentor – through part-time co-supervision – creative workshops and projects that enhance the field as a whole. The desirability of this was pointed out in one of our fact-finding encounters, where it was stated that “resources in our country could still be utilised far better than they are”. These Distinguished Professors will also be able to work in the company of the envisaged guest professors of the Academy/Institute from the rest of the continent and from key cooperating countries, and most certainly their continuing contributions to the academic system will enrich the scholarly life of the community.

A.3. The Virtual Schools are at the heart of the drive to create a doctoral community worthy of our current and future dilemmas. We already know that numbers of South African postgraduates have been declining, and the whole system is kept together because of the increasing presence of scholars from north of the Limpopo. It would be nice to retain a lot of the foreign talent that is being developed here, but this is a deeply political issue. At the same time, our encounters with such postgraduates in Gauteng pointed to the fact that they do not feel welcome, and they will be leaving upon the completion of their degrees. The African Renaissance Programme discussed below attempts to address this vexing issue.

The challenges have been magnified in most of our encounters. They were highlighted further by discussions with senior state officials who pointed to a critical shortage of post-doctoral level experts in most development fields and in the growing areas of sustainable development, job creation, employment dynamics, and the strategic design of redistributive policies for reducing inequalities.

This is amplified by the fact that the majority of postgraduate enrolments in Development Studies are Africans from countries north of the Limpopo or North Americans and Europeans. Whereas programmes enjoy a cosmopolitan atmosphere, very few students remain in the country for more than 2–3 years. This is not helped by the

decline of strong Industrial and Labour Studies/Planning and Development Planning Programmes that lost their allure in the period of market fundamentalism. With the exception of a few programmes, South Africa is not producing the new corps of thinkers who can nurture socio-economic alternatives. Where there is more capacity and initiative is in the environmental and eco-centric programmes, but here too the dearth of black enrolments is a point of concern.

The creation of such Schools in areas of local importance is one thing; the staggering of this process over two phases needs explication. This approach is proposed based on the pragmatic realisation that the first initiatives have to occur where there is a critical mass of such scholarship in the country, in order to give momentum to the process as a whole. The majority of PhD registrations are to be found in Gauteng (27.5 per cent of the 4 515 for 2009), followed by the Western Cape (18.5 per cent) and KwaZulu-Natal (14.1 per cent); UNISA follows (dealt with separately because it is a national and international distance learning hub) (12.8 per cent), then Eastern Cape (9.6 per cent), North West Province (9.3 per cent), Free State (6.5 per cent) and Limpopo (1.7 per cent); these percentages refer to absolute numbers of students. In terms of percentages of PhD registrations relative to the national average, the Western Cape stands at 1.97 per cent as opposed to the 0.9 per cent national average, followed by the Free State at 1.3 per cent. Starting where there is a stronger concentration of students will allow for a careful expansion of the system by 2015, bringing into the picture the two new provincial universities of the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga, with additional Virtual Schools established in other regions of the country over the following years. These might, for example, focus on Environmental Challenges (Climate Change, Water, Natural Resources etc.); Medicine, Disease and Curing; Gender and Sexuality; the Social and Educational Value of New Media and Communications Technologies etc.

The names of the Schools are signposting an areas in which PhD-related work has been declining and/or not having a strong South African concentration of scholars. Furthermore, they are areas that have been identified through our workshops as areas of potential strength, relevance and

excellence. The legacy of AC Jordan in aesthetics, folklore and literature; the legacy of Reuben Caluza in musical composition and performance; the legacy of Govan Mbeki as an educator and a powerful interlocutor on the peasant question; and finally, Josiah Gumede's attraction to political economy and internationalism signpost areas of scholarship that are in need of nourishment.

We have noted the EDF's comment that the field of education needs to be considered as one of the fields that should be "dynamised" within the HSS, and that the proposed "academy/institute" should take into account the implications for schooling and teacher education in the work that it does. The question of how to foster excellence in that sphere will be followed up in the second phase.

The creation of a Virtual School in a province will have to occur on a cooperative basis, despite healthy competition between institutions. The imperative for cooperation is based on actual merging of best practice: we have noted that a lot of the articulated success stories, especially at the more advanced levels of research and scholarship, are related to donor contributions and clustering methodologies. Their contribution has been particularly marked in regard to PhD scholarship. A significant volume of resources have been allocated to the development of PhD scholars, especially from disadvantaged communities, and appropriate environments have been created whereby a very significant departure from the traditional PhD supervisor/supervisee relationship is initiated, to create an educational context that involves, inter alia, hubs of researchers, supervisors and external experts who have been brought in to teach aspects of methodology and theory.

A.4 The last decade has been marked by a drive to "internationalise". There is no institution without contact and some relationship with European, Australian and North American universities. The new trend, though, is increasingly of a South-South nature. We have noted many initiatives and bilateral agreements that involve other societies in the South – they are to be found in 15 of the 23 institutions visited. They are difficult to assess at

this stage because of their novelty, and there has been no long history of engagement which could mature into deep insight. Their importance for university leaderships is clearly articulated and the enthusiasm by academic staff involved is undoubted.

That is why, following the generosity of Indian and Chinese partners who are making scholarships available for our students, and whose support is beginning to rival European and North American generosity, we need to start participating in this flow of talent: therefore we make the recommendation that the Academy should host and place 100 postgraduate students (at Master's and PhD level) per year, from other African countries and other developing societies, who will be studying in our country in key areas of the HSS, as part of the African Renaissance Development Programme discussed below. In addition, students already in the system need to be identified and supported where necessary.

A.5, A.6 and A.7 The need for the Academy (here the role of an Institute becomes strained) to create a national committee that works actively (in consultation with national professional associations) on the recognition of South African and other relevant journals by the "authorising" and accrediting centres of the international scholarly community is obvious. As one participant noted, "our own local journals are not given enough weight, and as a result we perpetuate the system we have, those journals don't develop".

As the 2010 World Social Science Report (International Social Science Council 2010) makes clear, we do exist in a globalising world of knowledge, and however problematic the methodologies of the international ranking systems and agencies are, and whatever their implications for HSS scholarship, we need to take the system seriously even if we are evolving our own criteria of "wellness". There is pressure that we make recommendations for improving performance in each of the areas of concern: not only an increase in research productivity, but publication in recognised journals; increasing the reputational excellence of our institutions; improving our ratios of postgraduate

to undergraduate enrolments; and improving our staff to student ratios. In other words there is pressure and support for allowing external criteria of wellness to define our practice.

We will have an enduring problem with an externally driven criterion of “wellness”: all things considered, there are only three institutions in South Africa that make it into the top 500 in the world. It is realistic to raise the number to six or seven in the next five years, through decisive interventions and state support. This would leave 17 institutions unattended. We can consider how we formulate this goal in terms of what other developing societies are doing in this regard. The Chinese Ministry of Education has made the decision to move in this direction and help 100 of its tertiary institutions to achieve “international status”. India is more circumspect, because such a trajectory would change the character of what academic leaders think are their sites of excellence. In terms of the existing South African performance system, there are six institutions that are high performers, a number that may increase to 10 in the next five years through decisive interventions and state support; this would leave 13 institutions out of the process.

There are also another two layers to the dilemma: there is the need for a national adaptation of such criteria of “wellness”, which have until now been subsumed under the overarching science-centric policy that defines a system of institutional rewards – from publication in accredited journals to successful Master’s and PhD supervision; and then there must be a series of appropriate parameters and templates of good performance and practice that define the integrity of our institutional audits.

Added to these external props are internal ones: each institution has developed internal reward systems – i.e. ways of recognising creative output, community service, distinguished teaching and in-house teaching innovations. Nevertheless, despite egalitarian language, there is strong support for criteria that stipulate hierarchies of achievement, reward and personal promotion. The first batch of criticisms voiced is that all is not well with the existing system, and this critique bifurcates in its views of

what the problems are: one argument is that the criteria are too technicist and technocratic, and ignore contextual and specific HSS qualities; there is also a stark alternative viewpoint that there is a need for objective technical criteria, because there is too much nepotism, patronage and discrimination in the system. There are a large number of academics who therefore prefer to revert to technicist/objective criteria. In relation to the internal recognition of creative output, one participant said that “one of the great gifts, if you like, that the humanities can give to society is in the area of creativity, and the persistent frustration of not only of us but of all the universities is the complete refusal of the Department of Education to accredit creative work. We have instituted our own internal procedures for the accreditation of creative work, but we never get further than that and I really think that until they do so they are not giving due recognition to creative work.”

Many black academics feel that the white networks that have de facto run academic decision-making are blocking black advancement, and reward their own, yet conversely even this argument bifurcates racially as well: many white academics feel that there are unjustified promotions based on patronage, expediency and colour.

There is consensus among deans in HSS and academic staff that the national system has to recognise “a HSS uniqueness”: books and chapters in books should be rewarded, and not only accredited journal articles. To illustrate: “We get very little funding for the book chapters and in some cases books and chapters are not even regarded – those things will impact on our image.”

There is a counter-argument that book publishers in the main are governed by market and commercial considerations rather than scholarly ones, and that the real innovations and discoveries in “genuine” science do not make book-like bestsellers. There is merit in this concern, but there are very few scholarly journals in the HSS internationally (and increasingly nationally) that are not part of “stables” produced by multinational or national profit-seeking publishers. The issue is not the book versus the journal, but the kind of peer review necessary

to authenticate the scholarly integrity of a book. That there are further implications related to e-publishing and open-access commons needs little comment. We are awaiting the ASSAf recommendations on this issue before recommending a precise policy change.

Furthermore, there is a strong voice arguing for the recognition and reward of creative work – it is noted for now, and will be discussed further below under the theme of Arts and Performance. We need to signpost the fact that we do recommend changes in the national system in this regard.

Such an approach will have to be balanced with the achievement of something different: a diversified system of performance excellence. There is also the need that we have to be sensitive to the needs of the applied side of these fields – remembering their links to professional associations in terms of their qualifications – and the more “generic” ones, because there can be no compromise on the quality of delivery on the one hand, and on the other hand there is a need to do something about the decline in numbers of postgraduate enrolments, which affects such a crucial area in our country.

Therefore, recommendation A.6 is to create a national panel that will review submitted books and recommend or refuse their accreditation, and recommendation A.7 is the establishment of a committee that will review performance contributions and recommend or refuse their recognition for accreditation.

A.8. There is a serious need to establish a committee to review the performance contributions of practice-linked knowledge in development initiatives. Much of the work in the fields of Social Work, Adult Education, Community Development and Clinical Psychology, to name but a few, is practice-driven and practice-linked, related to setting up processes that need nurturing and analysis and a relational complexity between educator/researcher and subjects. Such a committee will also help in assessing how popular education should be supported by the DHET. There are educational initiatives in South African society that range

from the transmission of basic skills to levels of remarkable complexity. To brand them as “non-formal education” avoids a clear understanding of what is happening outside the strictures of the qualifications framework.

A.9 This recommendation will become clearer if it is read together with the proposals in Section B (discussed further below) that address internationalisation, joint degrees and cooperation.

The Academy will have to play a key role in three further areas that respond to the challenges of “digitality” and new educational technologies: it will have to mobilise and network the most distinguished teachers and researchers in the fields; gather and disseminate relevant data for the HSS fields generated by SAQA and CHE and their related research initiatives; and interact actively with quality control bodies in the country, because the overall quality of its domain will be its vital responsibility.

A coda was presented to us by our European guests: “The tendency in many European systems to merge quality control and funding decisions and thereby to make funding decisions effectively the only real purpose of quality control is probably perverse and counter-productive; and keeping separate the two functions, thereby emphasising that the purpose of quality control is not simply to allocate money but that it has other purposes in its own right, would probably be very valuable.” The Academy/Institute will strive to improve quality, over and above overseeing a fairer reward system.

## **B. The African Renaissance Programme**

B.1 That the proposed Academy should establish a Pan-African consortium of universities to initiate a programme in which African students at Honours and Master’s level in HSS can study for a semester across national boundaries in Africa is also an obvious recommendation.

The Task Team encountered many criticisms of the existing “lip-service” paid to Africa, “Afropolitanism” and the African Renaissance. Scholars in 12 of the 23 institutions were concerned about “constant declarations” and “branding

exercises" without due substance. They were dissatisfied with the existing state of things, which continues without theoretical, methodological, curriculum-based and research content-based changes being made.

There was a further confusion relating to the place of post-colonial studies in HSS curricula. There is an argument that, by introducing post-colonial theory or its semiotics into the curriculum, one is on the cusp of an African renovation. This position has its supporters and its detractors. Post-colonial studies has been a growing field within the West's cultural studies programmes, providing a very vibrant critique of its "modernity", but it was argued by some, this was not synonymous with decolonisation, or with the decolonisation necessary to move the HSS into an open and critical post-apartheid era. Some of the harsher Africanists saw post-colonial studies as the "thin end of the wedge for the recolonisation and marginalisation of Africa by the Western Academy". The Task Team's role, though, was not to comment on debates but to try and understand what recommendations could be drawn from them.

There was also a significant challenge, related to the fact that since 1994, South Africa has been one of the growing destinations for intellectuals, academics and scholars from the rest of the African continent. This new diasporic concentration of African talent in South Africa needs careful consideration. The Task Team sees this as a potentially enriching and rewarding experience, and one aspect of this was made clear by the following input: "The large African component in the postgrad [sphere] also gives it a certain... continental and international character." It is a signal that there is potential for these academics from elsewhere on the continent to play an important role in a broader scholarly endeavour in South Africa.

B.2 The circulation of scholars, academics and young researchers between BRICS and IBSA countries on the basis of educational development agreements is highly desirable. Already China and India are in the forefront of offering opportunities for South African students to study abroad.

It is difficult to recommend BRICS-like joint institution-building initiatives, because many such relationships are new and difficult to assess. Nevertheless, such programmes should be identified, their strengths should be made clear, and the lessons learnt in the past few years need to be communicated to all. Here the DHET can play a vital role in coordinating information flows and monitoring successes and problems, through its International Affairs Directorate. Nevertheless, there are resources already committed to the broad areas of socio-economic development between India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA). Under IBSA's auspices quite a number of academics are exploring crucial alternatives. It becomes clear that the next step can be taken through the Virtual Schools outlined above. We envision, in Phase 2, the possibility of a School of African, Asian and Latin American Studies – a SOAS of the South – as a tangible reality.

One of the central obstacles to effective exchange programmes is that if students from developing societies are treated as foreigners, they will not be able to afford participation in our system – or alternatively, only a small sliver of their wealthy elites will be able to participate. There has to be a differentiated approach in terms of A, B and C currency-related countries (the International Sociological Association constantly re-classifies countries as currency fluctuations occur; and their classification system could reliably be used; in this system, South Africa is classified under B) and appropriate "costings".

It is recommended that 100 students from B and C countries are partly sponsored to spend a Master's year in the country.

Both students and academics will be allocated to the appropriate university institutions via the Virtual School.

B.3. The establishment of a statutory framework for joint degrees and programmes in the HSS is a serious priority.

The joint degree/programme has to be of the highest quality and provide an educational experience for a trans-

national community of students that is not possible within the boundaries of a single country.

Such an initiative in Africa will automatically foster a cooperative climate for peer review and for standard-setting, and will create clusters of students who will remain in long-term conversation with each other.

We recommend that a Technology University Consortium be established to facilitate such degrees in the Design and Creative BTech fields, where innovation in regard to aesthetic patterns can accelerate economic and entrepreneurial applications. Such an idea was vibrantly expressed in our fact-finding visits, and can be followed up without much debate. Such a process can be broadened to initiate cooperation with the very strong Design Schools of Egypt, which are very active in the African Union development agenda.

B4. There is a further recommendation that the Academy supports the formation of collaborative clusters involving Social Theory Laboratories (see Implementation Plan enhancing the cooperation between scholars of the continent in the research areas of their domain.

### **C. The National Centre for Lifelong Education and Educational Opportunities**

In our democratic and constitutional dispensation, our post-apartheid system has to be unapologetically student-centred. This immediately creates tension between the elitist and stratified (and stratifying) modalities of institutions and the democratic right to lifelong education, access and progress that any citizen of South Africa or de jure legitimate non-South African scholar, once admitted here, should enjoy.

Furthermore, as the EDF has recommended, there needs to be a greater coordination between the DHET and the DBE in relation to the realisation of the recommendations of the draft CHSS, so that a more streamlined and consistent approach can be developed.

We have to have access equity, and we must provide for equal life chances and appropriate life chances in terms of throughput. Our Task Team has been privileged to listen to the voices of primarily postgraduate students in the HSS. Their insights are the insights of our achievers and will be relevant on issues of "graduateness", the curriculum and institutional culture.

What has been worrying is that on most occasions academics in the fields have painted a picture of a "they" that is devoid of any notion or culture of human rights. In this picture, the students are the bearers of an educational "deficit" unsuited for further education, of a township culture that is anti-intellectual and of aspirations for mobility that are unrealistic: they can't write, they can't think and they are a waste of academic time and resources. This is somewhat illustrated in the following quote: "I don't know what skills these kids are getting at high school level or at matric, but they're definitely not good enough or they are wanting when it comes to them being well prepared for a university institution. So, again, the jump from high school to varsity, that's an important skills development that has to happen at high school, is not there, so much so that we end up teaching them how to write instead of teaching them philosophy."

This attitude of our homo academicus has to do with a severe South African black majority experience, but it refers to the "winners", to those who have succeeded in having access. It would be prudent to reflect on those "who do not make it there" – those who never matriculated; those whose matriculation proscribed access; those who failed during their first year; those who failed to secure a degree; those who have been granted a degree with grades that proscribe further study; those who have been accepted into postgraduate programmes whose grades proscribe further postgraduate study; and those who lack the financial means or are constrained by economic imperatives that prevent or de-prioritise further study. A democratic system based on a culture of rights cannot be about terminal closures; it must be about how to keep a variety of doors of learning open to enhance talent whenever it is manifested after an initial failure.

But each category of exclusion described involves a different policy mix. Their only commonality is that they all get “out there”, spend time working, doing a variety of knowledge-linked activities, so we have to have a door open for re-articulation and re-entry at the appropriate level of demonstration of talent. We need a coherent national policy so that the state and local authorities can advise students about career prospects, and we need universities and other tertiary institutions to articulate properly their RPL systems in order to allow for this. This has to be closely monitored as well, as there is a plethora of edu-charlatans who fleece the poor and cap them with unrecognised qualifications. There have been quite a number of academic entrepreneurs from our fields of study who make money out of such vulnerabilities.

So, therefore, recommendation C.4 concerning support for the National Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Strategy and initiatives including Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT), as well as all the implications outlined in the Recommendation, becomes the life-blood of such a Centre.

In proposing the formation of a National Centre for Lifelong Education and Educational Opportunities we are mindful of the responsibility to ensure access equity, but also of the relevance of qualifications for the economy and for broader community and societal needs.

On the economic relevance front there are solid indications in ASSAf-commissioned research that HSS graduates are doing much better in the labour market than what is perceived by the media and “common sense”. The “much better” must, however, be modified by the findings of research undertaken in 2006 by the Development Policy Research Unit for the Deputy Presidency (Development Policy Research Unit, University of Cape Town 2006). This research, based on a household census, pointed to a high level of graduate unemployment, the majority of which was in HSS fields. The overall figure was 17.6 per cent, lower than the national unemployed average but high enough to ring alarm bells and to lead the Deputy President’s Office to set up an unemployed graduates database, and attempt

to link this to economic and skill development through ASGISA.

The departure of the Deputy President and the restructuring that ensued in the “Jacob Zuma” era has left the database dormant and incomplete. It is unlikely that a guesstimate of close to 100 000 unemployed graduates could have been absorbed during the recession that ensued. It is also hard to extrapolate using comparative figures without the 2011 census having been completed, which will update national household statistics.

We expect the proposed National Centre to play an active role on this front as well. We therefore strongly recommend C.1 – the keeping of a database in the NLRD in collaboration with the DHET and DBE, the Quality Councils, the Planning Commission, the DoL and other key NQF and research organisations, to manage and monitor the experience and life chances of unemployed graduates, including matrices and graduates of FET and HET institutions, making sure that this monitoring includes tracking of people who are (1) unemployed; (2) employed but not in disciplines and fields in which they trained; and (3) employed in disciplines and fields in which they trained.

Furthermore, the arts and performance fields have experienced closures of departments and centres which were our system’s response to the perception that those fields were not economically viable in terms of students, expensive in terms of facilities and equipment, and were not an economic priority for the country’s development. The last point has been a fact-less assumption and has impaired our country in its ability to excel in the creative industries.

The downplaying and under-resourcing of these fields has created bottlenecks of talent. For example, in KwaZulu-Natal we were exposed to examples of talent that are being blocked from progressing, such as people with graphic design and drawing talent, who used to be catered for through SETA funding in Kwa-Mashu and could progress further through the tertiary system, especially the private tertiary education system. For complex internal reasons



the funding from the SETA has been withdrawn, and all of a sudden, because these areas are not catered for in the high school system, a lot of this talent is going to waste. Furthermore, a lot of the talent is also trapped in areas where, as in the case of the Bartle Arts Trust, there is skilling happening but there is no articulation at the “fourth level” so that skilled individuals can progress properly into the tertiary education system.

Such talent, which could easily be accommodated within an FET system, needs articulation with broader opportunities. But this is not exclusive to the arts and performance spheres; it could be and must be common to a vast array of talent. Therefore, we recommend C.2: establishment of a virtual institution in collaboration with SAQA (where existing institutions authorise a single coordinating institution) to address the gap between the FET and HET systems, such that: (1) the gaps within and between the two systems are articulated clearly; (2) the relationship between disbursement of funds and achievements is monitored; (3) the progression of learners through the systems is monitored; (4) developments are based on national articulation and lifelong learning policies, and existing and new articulation-related initiatives; (5) intra- and inter-institutional partnerships are encouraged and facilitated.

Nevertheless, it was also important to endorse the sentiment expressed by Saleem Badat in 2008: “[F]orcing universities to serve purely utilitarian ends reduces them to instruments of the economy. The responsiveness of universities... must be of a wider intellectual and social character” (Badat 2008).

This is echoed, surprisingly, by a leading labour service organisation activist from the Western Cape: “I also think we need to have a national debate on this concept of relevance, I want it just to lie low there – let’s destroy this idea of relevance. You know, I think we must re-promote the idea that you can go to university and learn how to play the Goema drum. Whether it helps the economy or not, let’s bury that notion. This is what is dragging us down, this kind of idea that this thing doesn’t create jobs and if it doesn’t make us beat the pants off China then we don’t

want to do it, is what is making knowledge narrower and narrower and narrower and narrower, until it becomes so narrow that it has no meaning at all. We must allow people to fly. Now, so I think universities are losing out, I think the universities are going backwards because of this chase after relevance and making our country competitive, and so on... If somebody wants to [study] butterfly rearing in the 14th century, let them do it, create the space to do it.”

The broader societal relevance and satisfaction that comes from the arts is tangible everywhere, and so a need for them is articulated by serious young and black people across the country, and most acutely by this Durban-based graduate: “People always ask me: why are you still in the NGO and still in the arts? And I think [it] is that fulfilment of being able to see somebody contributing towards something and feel like I am part of the community, I am part of the society. If I cannot speak but I can draw, you know. And I think now that has been extended to working with deaf people and being able to communicate with the deaf [...] we become – they become – part of the culture ... and all other disabilities that we never thought about them. So the scale is going up using the arts. And that for me, arts is powerful and it’s something that really needs a whole lot of support by us who have been talented and blessed, from the unborn child to a 100-years-old person.”

Nevertheless, many universities, including universities of technology, have fine-tuned their offerings to be responsive to utilitarian needs. But often, such needs are defined so narrowly as to be unresponsive to technological changes, or so generically as to forget that South Africa will continue being mining-, manufacturing- and services-biased, with a strong agrarian/rural imperative, and new economy/technology-type small firms. Similarly, the public sector will continue being an epicentre of developmental priorities. In the socio-economic policies of South Africa, specifically the ones that emanate from the DTI and in BRICS-related developments, one cannot assume a linear transition to post-Fordism or the knowledge economy, or to whatever seems fashionable at the moment.

The argument for the relevance of HSS-type qualifications

has been made eloquently by John Higgins in *Business Day* recently (Higgins 2010). Furthermore, there is widespread recognition that the creative and communication industries are at the cutting edge of any possible economic growth in at least three provinces.

Two focus groups, with serious economic leaders in our society and with leaders in the public sector respectively, raised the following concerns that directly affect our deliberations on relevance: that there is low trust about the quality of our students in the business world, and that somehow, even though our graduates are employed in large numbers, there are remedial deficits that are indefensible. No one has an argument against graduates “wasting their time” with values and with an ethical orientation to their work and the world at large. The private sector leaders are up front about it, the public sector leadership feels that they cannot be quoted in public but they agree that there are problems.

There was a strong perception that graduates with basic degrees in the HSS were weak where they should be strong. Their writing, compositional and assessment capabilities were not very good. There was a consensus that Bachelor’s degree graduates should have the skills necessary to work responsibly, i.e. understand what they do and, as educated people, do what they have to do without supervision.

There was also agreement that bearers of Honours degrees and postgraduate diplomas need to be able to work in contexts where they apply what needs to be done – i.e. that they can interpret for others, their peers and the people under their command, what needs to be done. They should be self-motivated to find out about things in their field, inter-culturally competent, and not treat their work as merely a job. With experience they could become reliable team leaders and players. The bearers of Master’s degrees present a conundrum – they ought to be the people who can coordinate activities and work but they always lack experience.

Companies do not have the time or resources, in these times of leanness and meanness, to provide these skills and the experience that develops them. It would be expected

of holders of PhDs to be at the strategic helm of operations and/or the steering and leadership levels of operations. The difference between PhDs and other postgraduates is that they should understand complexity and means-ends rationality in a globalising world (in the case of the former) and have value-based leadership qualities and a high inter-cultural competence. Of course, no “fresh” PhD can have all that, but these skills are expected by those who sponsor students to get a PhD.

Therefore C.5 became a priority recommendation: to establish, monitor, and research the existence and success rates of internship programmes in collaboration with all institutions offering such programmes and employment organizations – in relation to internship graduates at all levels (FET, HET undergraduate and HET postgraduate). All internships must be accredited and credit-bearing. Monitoring the relationship between these internships and further study and work must be included in these tracking activities.

What also concerned us was the point of interaction between communities and the tertiary education system. Such manifold interactions were often not beneficial to either the communities concerned or the university and broader tertiary education system. Thanks to the Wolpe Trust, the task team had three encounters (in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban) with communities, civil society movements and trade union organisations, and further than that, we conducted individual interviews where this was seen to be necessary. We asked participants to critically reflect on such encounters.

There are three issues that are of profound significance: there is a reluctance to cooperate with academic researchers, because people feel they are being used with little benefit to their constituencies.

To quote: “The universities come to us – we have a running joke, we can’t hold a meeting without some researcher scribbling away in a corner. And it’s very frequent to have some university researcher from anywhere, from Honours to PhD to postdoctoral studies to some academic writing a book, come in and do research. What is highly unusual is

to actually have one of these researchers send back their research when they have it. It's very, very unusual; I think in four years, the last four years, I must have spoken to just locally and internationally, maybe 60, 70, 80 researchers, somewhere around there, that level – I've seen two people send me back finished results."

They also feel that "the" university system has moved away from their immediate concerns and struggles, and serves international and local elite interests. They cited a number of exceptions to this, but the exception, as we were told, proved the rule.

A participant illustrates the point: "The issues – we've been fighting around acid mine drainage. It's a huge issue; it affects poor communities, you get a lot of run-off from mine dumps – there's uranium in people's houses. Where are the universities in South Africa about that? Half of them are contracted out to the [powers that be] – they're not independent anymore... so we have to rely on UK universities!"

Finally our discussions and deliberations pointed to the need to create a policy that permits a variety of "adult matric equivalents" – i.e. to empower legitimate community and social movement institutions with the capacity to provide such services, and be able to enjoy resource-based support; and, most importantly, to create institutional capacities to strengthen adult and lifelong learning/education where it is already strong, but paying particular attention to the rural context – i.e. the Eastern Cape and Limpopo. Therefore recommendation C3 is to facilitate, support and drive existing and new initiatives towards the provision of 'matriculation equivalents' in education and training – whereby learners are exposed to appropriate workplace experience at all levels, where necessary.

#### **D. The Catalytic Projects**

After careful mapping through our consultative exercise we identified a number of gaps that are at the heart of the issue of collective appropriation of place, of past, of language, of culture and of people, of history and of geography, and that could be of vital importance in the

first phase of implementation.

Noting that a "catalyst" has to produce benefits to the research project for the higher education system, and indeed society as a whole, by dynamising the fields, the disciplines and interdisciplinary work, and thereby also increasing the capacity to research further; theorise better and contribute to the raising of our status in the global academic commons, there were some areas that stood out with remarkable power:

It was important to look also at the funding landscape, where issues related to contemporary identity, race, gender, class and sexual choice are well funded, as are the key NRF areas of research – even though there is criticism of the fields chosen and the recipients rewarded, and they are under heavy scrutiny. The correlation between what the NRF funds through key projects and the scholarship published in the journals it recognises and rewards needs decisive scrutiny, because there is enormous divergence.

From a global perspective, Labour Studies, Urban and Social Movements Studies and a variety of Health (primarily HIV-linked) Studies enjoy an unparalleled international prestige. So do areas of History, Linguistics and Literature.

Yet, what we have also noted is the unfolding institutional weakness of disciplines concentrated around heritage, history, archaeology and linguistics. The fields have been seriously affected by the emphasis on the market and the marketability of their graduates.

If this was not enough, they have also been affected by mergers, and the subsequent merging of various programmes into schools or into new kinds of configurations, which seem to undermine the integrity of their intellectual projects. There is a managerial fear of small numbers in the system. This has led to the disappearance of independent history and independent archaeology departments, which might fulfil requirements for managerial efficiencies but could be to the detriment of the scholarly endeavour.

Whereas we argue that there are vital projects that need support for the continuity of their good efforts, and these

will be addressed through the envisaged Virtual Schools, there are six catalytic projects that are concerned with constituting our dignified future presence in the HSS fields.

D.1 This is a national project to construct, through all available scholarly means, a history of broader South Africa from the 11th to the 16th century. Such a team must include, for example, historians, archaeologists, linguists, geneticists and other specialists, and must lay the foundation for all ensuing research. This historiography of much of Southern Africa is fragmented, as opposed to the Angola, Congo, Mozambique continuum and its interactions with a declining Zimbabwean civilisation.

Furthermore, we need to understand that many of the indigenous languages need to play a broader role in the construction of our policy. They must be extended into the discourses of scientific fields (whether it is philosophy or history or other areas) where they could be contributing to both knowledge construction and new ways of being able to understand the social, the literal and the oral, as opposed to the learning of a language as such.

That is why recommendation D.2 is a priority: a national multi-disciplinary project on the way indigenous languages in South Africa could help in the process of concept formation in the HSS. For example, does the distinction between "sebenza" and "dala" create new ways of understanding labour and work in sociological contexts? Does the fact that there are at least 23 ways of describing "poverty" in the Nguni oral lexicon offer a way of understanding agencies better? Does the grammatical structure of local languages demand a different logic from the Boolean or the Aristotelian? A project, if carefully designed, would move the discussion of language to the heart of HSS.

Recommendation D.3 presents a more recent challenge. The strongest popular/adult and community education activity is located in the Western Cape, whereas activity in this field in KwaZulu-Natal, which was very vibrant a decade ago, has declined. Gauteng has witnessed a lot of mainstreaming of worker and community education (although adult education has been in decline). There has been, in short, a robust effort in terms of urban working

class education; yet tragically, the highest levels of need are in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo, where adult and community education has needed a strong rural and small-town bent.

The only example of an articulated progress from worker education to university access is in KwaZulu-Natal, and occurs within the experimental relationship between a worker education institution and a university. The external examination of the diplomas awarded to students by the university functions as an "adult matric equivalent". The progress of adults from the trade union and community organisations has had its successes and failures.

One understands that in social movements and trade unions, a lot of the education necessary is a collective and not a private responsibility, yet the experiment motivates us to create a number of recommendations. But, these approaches have a deeper historical pedigree that needs to be recovered, restored and reconstructed.

Therefore, a national project to recover the traditions of popular education in the country, and to identify the key methodological innovations of educational practices in South Africa, can contribute to a broader world of educational interactions.

Recommendation D.4 also demands serious attention. We have noted the importance of heritage institutions in any society, and in most developing and developed societies heritage sites are vital research-producing areas. This is as true of the Smithsonian in the United States as it is of the Nehru Memorial Museum in Delhi. The reduction of heritage to market dynamics and, given policy priorities, to tourism dynamics needs to be reviewed. It has not done "much good" to the integrity of the scholarly project in those areas.

Furthermore, there are a number of local authority-linked museums, heritage initiatives and micro-history projects, that are trying (outside the university system) to produce knowledges relating to the society we are living in. There has to be an articulation between the tertiary system of education and all these initiatives in society.

There was a strong view articulated in at least four provinces that one needs to move away from the apartheid design of placing black tertiary institutions in “remote” rural areas, towards creating robust institutions in partnership with surrounding communities, working alongside their attempts to preserve heritage, oral performance and indigenous know-hows, and coming closer to rural transformation and rural production/livelihoods, biodiversity and health. There also, pedagogy implies different forms of internship and exposures and a more variegated funding formula. As one participant pointed out, “if you look at the broader aspects of the area geographically – we are in a rural area... But the institution seems to lack in terms of capitalising on that, because we must be taking those opportunities that we are in a very strategic position in terms of the resources around, the resources in terms of knowledge that we should be tapping up there, in such a way that you’ll find other institutions... our neighbours, having institutes around us – and you ask yourself, is it our problem or is it the challenge of the resources that we cannot reach out to those communities?”

These concerns all lead to the dire necessity for the establishment of five Humanities Hubs that are not only centres of heritage but are also centres of ongoing research, documentation of know-hows, oral stories and poetry, knowledge production, student internship and education. If heritage haunts and beckons, there is also a need to understand, as recommendation D.5 states, the biodiversity (to borrow from elsewhere) and the social ecology and social sources of creativity in the country, before the tertiary system can play a meaningful role.

There is, furthermore, a need to overcome the national inability to understand the role of performance and art in our society. There is very little understanding of the community outreach involved, and of how cutbacks have affected this essential interface. A participant in the revolutionary workers’ theatre of the 1980s recalled for us: “So to set yourself and be able to get yourself as the woman to be seen, to be heard, it took a lot of, you know, like guts. Getting other men to work with you and getting to go on stage with men and pass on the message. So it was quite a dynamic way of educating. It was education

beyond Bantu Education, beyond Bantustan Education.”

Finally, there is little doctoral-level research that provides a coherent overview of the vitality of local performance and art traditions, their dominant aesthetic features and their evolution, the variety of urban and rural forms, the shifts between orality, literacy and digitality. For this, we were told ironically, the fields themselves are partly to blame: they deconstructed themselves into inertia.

It is in this light that a national multidisciplinary research project on the Social Sources of Creativity is being argued for: it should explore how they are created and sustained in performance, music, dance, photography and other creative fields – what elements enhance, shape and influence the wealth of grassroots talent and what elements constrain it. This will be vital for the long-term study of cultural formations and social change, but also for arts and culture policy, educational policy and conservation.

Finally, recommendation D.6 is crucial: it addresses the fact that most of the formative work in the HSS of the period from the 1950s to the late 1980s remains unpublished as manuscripts or PhD and Master’s theses gathering dust on shelves in the country and overseas. This reproduces a culture of continuous discontinuity (to steal an expression from Prof. Pitika Ntuli). For example, social psychologists in South Africa worked on Fanon and education philosophers on Freire in the 1970s and 1980s. There were manuscripts and theses (that remained unpublished because the conventional schools in South Africa were indifferent to such ideas) and there was debate. A South African scholar goes to the hypothetical Duke or Chicago, picks up on Fanon-like figurations, returns home, starts a syllabus that is linked to the US debates and starts supervising students whose literature review and theoretical foundation ignore totally the existing local legacy. The same occurs with the work of the Surplus People Project, the Carnegie Commission into Poverty, with work done in the past on people’s and working class culture, and so on – the list is worrisome. There is much that needs to be restored in the social sciences and humanities.

The need for a project to recover such lineages of knowledge production from the 1950s to the 1980s, to bring to light unpublished theses, manuscripts, academic and scholarly and personal diaries, oral archives, and field-notes in the HSS, and to bring them into the academic mainstream, is a priority

### **E. Integrity-linked Interventions**

There is a limit to what an Academy, a National Centre for Lifelong Education and Educational Opportunities, an African Renaissance Programme and a menu of Catalytic Projects can do in the context of the autonomy and integrity of university councils and senates. There is a limit, too, to what the custodians of a reward system, like the DST and the NRF, can do, short of punitive or exclusionary measures.

So it is with any attempt to reward excellence, however defined, even when excellence is linked to transformation, black advancement, social responsibility and good pedagogies. Whatever the criteria, there will be institutions that are not "excellent".

As we were informed in our international encounter; "in the European model... you punish them – you cut their funding, thereby creating pressure to perform. Clearly in the South African context the conclusion might be exactly the opposite – it might be that these are precisely the institutions that require priority support. But in order to identify that and to give benchmarks by which to measure the benefits derived from the priority support, the absolute criteria of excellence will be very useful and a methodological tool, and also as a pedagogical tool to give a common language within which to think about, at national level, what our higher education and research institution should be."

It is the consensus of the Task Team that our higher education and research system needs a differentiation not on the basis of resource inequality but based on a differentiation of visions, of focuses and priorities. We need to be flexible enough to allow for pluralism and diversity, be generous enough to allow competition between priorities

and visions and still be able to cooperate. The key point is simply a diversity of visions that should be expressed within any well-functioning system.

It is correct, therefore, that in trying to address the HSS it is inevitable that one must deal with the concept of the university as such.

Take one dilemma: There are a number of institutions that have taken their more rural context seriously (invariably these were the hitherto disadvantaged bantustan-based universities of the apartheid past) and have attempted to interact with land reform and agrarian programmes. It is also a serious social fact that industrialisation in South Africa did not entail de-ruralisation, and that the majority of South Africa's black urban working class continues to support homesteads in the countryside. But there are variations in what is meant by taking the rural context more seriously: there are those for whom, in the words of community leaders, "it is not a partnership, it is simply 'extracting' from us" as against those who are in a reciprocal, "working with" relationship. How does one reward and differentiate, even if social responsibility and interaction are viewed in a more favourable (reward) light?

Granted, if one were to try and address the extreme inequality between universities, and the reality that they do operate in different worlds, how does one reward diverse integrities?

The urban/rural dimension of the new dispensation is one such dilemma; another relates to the vexed issue of the curriculum. In 19 of the 23 institutions members of academic staff and students criticised the curriculum. To illustrate the dilemmas faced in this regard, one participant had the following to say: "We have to look at also our research agendas and our curriculum. We can't transform the demographics of the staff and then have a curriculum that's hanging over from the '60s or '70s or '80s that is not dynamic. There are things we have to retain in South Africa because the '60s, '70s and '80s, the apartheid struggle produced interesting knowledge and insights. People like you know very well what I'm talking about; but also in the new context, how do we leverage that past excellence into

a new form of excellence in the diversified environment? And also how do we look at our research agendas and our curriculum?" Such a criticism does not remain within the university system, but extends to whatever elements of the HSS curriculum exist in the primary and secondary education system.

There are also two forms of alienation that need redress. The first is one in which students collectively or as individuals feel neglected and uncared for; that they are just "making up the numbers". We were told of forms of behaviour on the part of administrative and academic staff that borders on criminality, but this is beyond our mandate and the DHET is aware of many such cases.

There is another dimension which is articulated by senior black (predominantly African) students, where they feel like strangers in their land when they arrive in lecture theatres – they complain of enforced subject matter that does not speak to their experience, of curricula that remain Eurocentric.

According to a drop-out student from an art degree who is nonetheless a very successful artist, "it is Eurocentric. The philosophy of teaching art, the tools that are used to teach art, the content, when you talk about theory we talk about all artists that come from Europe. If you are to define or [be] detailed or whatever; all those theories are coming from Europe; which disconnect this African child from his immediate environment. He cannot connect with what – in terms of technicality it does make sense, but you disconnect this person from the environment he knows."

How does one reward curriculum transformation? What constitutes disciplinary wisdom and its dissemination, who else but peers can act as judge and jury?

There is a strong view that the curriculum has to reflect the knowledge production that has been going on in Africa; there is another voice that argues for addressing "the issue of diversifying the programmes within our universities and creating specific programmes which are directly relevant to the location of that particular university – for instance, if you have universities that are in the rural areas, so we need

to have programmes that are directly linked to the social issues within that particular area."

In all the abovementioned areas one can only create an environment that encourages university leaderships, deans in the HSS and Education fields, academics and students to engage, debate and convince the broader system that something important is going on.

The mooted Academy can play a serious and important double role, in that the proposed Forum of recipients of Distinguished Teachers Awards can deliberate on and reward programmes that are sensitive to transformation and student-centredness. To that effect the Academy will become the custodian of a Curriculum Transformation Fund that will be distributed to deserving programmes and institutions.

As concerns the broader reward system and its need to shift towards a diverse matrix of rewards, we need to signpost its importance and ask the DHET to initiate a dialogue between itself and the DST, as well as trilateral discussions with HESA about the concrete implications of changes in this system.

But "wellness" is not only about performance indicators, it is also about creating a milieu or an institutional culture where performance occurs as a matter of fact. We need a series of criteria that allow us to critically reflect and self-reflect on what needs to be done in order to have a conducive teaching and learning environment, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. The message from our HSS colleagues is that such a milieu is absent.

Furthermore, there is a variety of opinions about what this could mean. To be blunt, the majority of black academics we have spoken to are upset that the recommendations of the "Soudien Report" on racism and prejudice in our system (Soudien et al. 2008) have not been considered, or have not been put at the centre of HSS Faculty deliberations. Many academics are also worried about the new punitive managerialism that has taken hold of university life.

Furthermore, while the majority of students in the

humanities are black, the staff composition of most faculties and departments, despite attempts at redress, still remains largely white. As stated in many interviews, this has created tension amongst staff members and between staff and students. In fact, the HSS Faculty, in most of these institutions, is seen as relatively more transformed, compared to other faculties in the same university. Nevertheless, the failure of faculties to transform meaningfully has led to talk of "many faculties of humanities in one institution", contributing to the inability of the faculty to speak with one voice, precisely because of divergence.

There is a need to change the funding formula to reflect actual needs in the system based on the realistic costs of programmes. This will be futile unless the custodians of the qualifications and degrees, the deans in most cases, and their boards and committees, make sure that an equitable and realistic distribution happens within their institutions. This can be difficult, because "people often complain about resourcing from national, but also remember that resources from national don't necessarily ... they are not deterministic in the first instance. They don't say this is how we give you the money, so you must parcel it out this way. So how a university does internal resource allocation is its business and that is where sometimes there isn't a lot of imagination."

Noted throughout our institutional visits was how structurally different each Faculty of Humanities is, and thus there is no uniformity in terms of which core disciplines or departments form part of "a humanities or social sciences" faculty. There is, furthermore, no uniformity or similarity across institutions in terms of what is meant by a Social Science, Arts, Education or Creative degree in the universities of technology. Many of the departments and programmes that are within a faculty of HSS in one institutions might be found in other faculties in some other institutions, and so on. In some institutions there are schools and no departments, in other institutions there are only service departments with no autonomous departments.

It is imperative that deans, through their two entities, SAHUDA and the EDF, arrive at some coherent principles, not only of what it means to be a graduate but also of the core attributes of each qualification. They would need

to reflect on the tension between a diversifying education system and the coherence necessary to allow for discussion, mobility and exchange of students.

There is consensus that being a graduate implies having the qualities of a lateral and critical thinker; an ethical citizen, a person who appreciates social solidarity and community engagement. Graduates need to be able to be at home anywhere on the continent and in the global village, meaning that they have to be able to understand all the butterfly effects we produce through our local actions; and they must be computer-literate enough to be empowered and networked.

Therefore, our recommendations are obvious:

E.1 That SAHUDA prepare an input to the Ministerial Committee for the Review of the Funding of Universities which takes cognisance of the Task Team's recommendation that adjustments will be necessary, but also that it sit together and, in relation to SAQA and other relevant institutions, arrive at a clear understanding of "graduateness" within degree structures.

Here the role of language in the BA, BSocSc, BTech and BEd has to be addressed carefully, and not only because most language-related programmes have experienced reductions in student numbers. The role of indigenous languages must be reflected with some commitment.

Also in the mix must be the initiatives that attempt to create sites for the learning of what institutions see as new "relevant languages" – we see the introduction of Hindi and Mandarin, we see, in terms of religious studies, Arabic coming forward in leaps and bounds as a language area. There are also lusophone initiatives, because of the new proximity of Brazil, as well as the enduring non-communication between South African scholars and their Mozambican and Angolan counterparts.

There are attempts at the introduction of other African languages (like Swahili) – and so there is a whole range of complex language-related issues that need to be sorted out.



Furthermore, the question must be addressed: what attributes and dispositions should students in general, and HSS students in particular possess, at their graduation? What do they need to have to be empowered citizens and to be able, productive, and creative human beings? Here the HSS have a key role to play in providing both the linguistic and social literacy for the entire tertiary system. As we were told, doctors “do not just work on hearts but also possess their own”. That such an all-round education is seen as unnecessary in some quarters, or that this is seen as not being appropriate for professional training, is a misconception. This attitude is not shared by most tertiary university leaderships and we are aware of a number of remarkable initiatives, different in nature but similar in intent; we are aware of the details of three institutions where academics have gone beyond the call of duty to create substantive encounters through which their undergraduate students can nurture a broader value-based and critical awareness. To quote: “you can have all the science innovation that you want; if you do not understand what its social impact is going to be, it’s not going to help you much because you won’t know where to go to, what to do with this. And for me that new project, if you want, or direction that the university is taking is very encouraging because I think it’s a practical way also of bringing the humanities to the attention of other faculties, it’s not just sitting there, the eternal victim ‘nobody takes us serious’, etc.”

So any curriculum we suggest has to include a deep awareness of language, of the tools to analyse social encounters, a critical awareness, but also an awareness of the role of science and technology in society – the last was strongly advocated for during one of our engagements with leadership at a higher education institution in South Africa. Such an awareness will, over and above its own integrity, help with creating solutions for the dilemmas raised by the economic leaderships in our country.

The most intense responses in the HSS community were related to the policies, role and performance of the NRF. The criticisms became more vociferous as regards the priority areas of research that it supports, and the poor academic results that they have generated. This rather long but representative quote illustrates some of the frustrations

of HSS academics in dealing with the NRF:

“...there has to be a time where we complain about the NRF. First of all, there’s the whole issue of what kinds of projects they fund – and that more or less the only conceivable stuff that a philosopher could apply to is the dreaded blue sky enquiry which is the most competitive. Set that aside – there’s a dreaded, a kind of a lack of understanding of at least my field in that institution. Colleagues of mine have sent in proposals for grants and they don’t get sent to philosophers to review, they get sent to people in other fields and it’s just very clear, there’s just a lack of comprehension of the language or even the concepts going on. One time a colleague of mine did receive money, but the comments that came with it were something to the effect of: it’s rare that the NRF fund the esoteric social sciences, and so in this case we will do so. Philosophy, you’re describing philosophy as an esoteric social science – I mean, it’s just bizarre to me. Ja, really, it’s really disturbing.”

The critique is straightforward – as mentioned above, it imposes on the HSS a Science and Technology blueprint of innovation. By implication it has distorted national scholarship and excellence in the HSS. Whereas most encounters in this regard were critical, responses are more ambiguous about the rating system, where opinion has been divided. Both point to the necessary re-evaluation of the NRF’s mission, vision and practices – a demand that is beyond the mandate of our Task Team. Not only should the NRF be reviewed, but the reward system also needs to be reconfigured.

## **F. The 14 Corrective Interventions**

Despite criticisms of the basic education system and its deficits, we are faced with the most vital of responsibilities: our students constitute 40 per cent (327 230 students) of the existing student body in the country. The majority are registered for Education degrees and diplomas (42.3 per cent, although only 68 per cent of these are entirely HSS-dependent); then follow the Social Sciences (35.8 per cent, which includes Psychology); then Applied Creative and Technical Degrees (12.2 per cent); and then the Arts, Languages and Literature (9.7 per cent – this includes

Philosophy). If we take a 1990 benchmark, the figures have increased by 24 per cent; if we take the last decade, they have been growing at 2–3 per cent and would have declined in 2008 if it was not for the swift reduction of matriculation points requirements in a few big institutions. The majority of students are registered with UNISA – 38.9 per cent. The second-largest concentration of HSS students is in Gauteng (21.6 per cent), followed by the Western Cape (9.11 per cent), KwaZulu-Natal (8.7 per cent), the Eastern Cape (8.1 per cent), North West Province (6.8 per cent) and Limpopo (2.6 per cent).

Over and above the perceived unpreparedness of the majority of students, the dominant view is that they are on average (there are exceptions) the students with the lowest matriculation points and the students who have been rejected from other career paths.

There have been many nuanced accounts in our fact-finding visits about the need to correlate ability and performance with class, race, language and gender variables. Such an understanding of the challenges was found to coexist with a common-sense culture based on a pop sociology which is rather racialised: Model C plus black = potential and success, Non-Model C plus black = failure. It is a moot point that the majority of black academic staff in our university system are not from Model C schools.

F.I Although the first year “killing fields”, as it was graphically described in our first workshop, is not restricted to HSS subjects and there are indeed higher failure rates in other areas, this does not mean that an intervention in our areas of study needs deferral or postponement. There are specific qualities in the narrative and social scientific fields that can be ameliorated through decisive care in getting a well coordinated tutorial system up and running. To illustrate this point from a dean’s perspective: “It’s improving... but the throughput is not that fantastic. I don’t have actual figures but I could e-mail them to you later. You are right that the class[es] therefore are too large because first-years are often very large as well. And also, as you know, many people have serious trepidation teaching first-years. I love going to teach the first-years, I still contribute to first-year teaching because I think they are very enthusiastic and excited. But

most people are not too comfortable with that. Also a big class is very hard to manage. Then the tutorial groups are huge. I don’t think a tutorial group should be more than 12; 15 for me is max.”

So the real crisis point in our entire HSS system is at first-year level. The problems are many: large classes, understaffed programmes, poorly qualified staff and poorly run departments, high failure rates, poor resources, limited access to computer labs, unsupportive library systems.

We feel strongly that the first-years need a national-level intervention. The DHET must ring-fence money (i.e. such money cannot be used for anything else by receiving institutions) towards the improvement of the tutor-to-student ratios (i.e. no tutorial with more than 20 students anywhere!).

This is entirely feasible. There are about 130 000 students in their first year of study in HSS-related programmes in the country. There are 4 833 Master’s scholars – at two tutorials each per week, with tutorial groups of 20 in each, they could easily reach double the number of first-year students. There is also a need to address the student-to-lecturer ratio, lecturer-to-programme and/or -department ratios (no programme/major with fewer than five members of academic staff), so that the educational endeavour in the HSS is taken seriously and we deliver a non-negotiable decent national first-year system. This should go hand-in-hand with a resource ratio of  $\times$  number of students per computer, and no computer unlinked to a subscription to online academic journal databases. Our task team will develop a formula and a costing for this.

The Social Sciences are the primary sites where the effects of a massified student population are felt, and where unwieldy classes are the norm rather than the exception. Our encounters with some of these situations and the lecturers concerned have rung serious alarm bells: “Every programme will take a lot of first-years and some of it is financial because students also mean fees, they mean income. So there’s also a dangerous situation nationally here where students might be a fundraiser, but nobody

cares about what they are because of the large number of students." What is shocking is not only how many people fail but how many people actually pass under conditions of suspect pedagogic encounters.

F.2 The recommendation here is that the Student Loan Fund (NSFAS) is expanded to cover all students studying in the system and that funding does not discriminate against HSS students in any field. Funding needs to be made available at the time of registration, and needs to cover the full costs of the study programme.

There are two aspects that keep on surfacing in all our encounters: equitable financial aid for all subjects of study (where there is the strong perception that certain subjects "do not count"); and class bias within race categories. There is a perception that high performance and reward correlate strongly with class and stratum.

There are competing notions, too, about what tertiary education should be about – there is strong support among white and Indian senior students for the argument that education should be a privilege based on merit, whereas there is a diversity of opinion among coloured and African students – the majority view, though, in these last two contested categories is that education should be a universal right.

One view was that one way of paying back – because the more years one adds to a programme the greater the cost, obviously – the one way of paying back would be to require community service of graduates: that they go and teach in communities, in rural areas, in townships or wherever there are teachers needed. A strong view has been expressed that HSS graduates also be required to render a year's community service.

F.3 It is recommended that annual growth of HSS intakes be closely monitored by the existing institutions in consultation with the National Centre for Lifelong Education and Educational Opportunities.

Furthermore, postgraduate students are experiencing specific problems such that we would like to hear their

voices; we need to stop treating them as aliens and start treating them as an essential cadre of the future university, bringing them into our fields instead of treating them as numerical digits, as is done at the moment, an attitude forced on us by the pressure to massify Master's and PhD levels in order to get more productivity points. As one student said, "I've experienced a lot of problems with my supervisor, like tears all the time because of --- Maybe it's the fact that they don't have enough time even for the students that they are supervising. And maybe it's the workload, and they do take on a lot of students to supervise at one time. So there should be some allocation of how many students per person can be supervised because where we are, there's like four, eight, six to one lecturer – and when you try and get time with them it's kind of like they're skimming through your information, they re-do it quickly, give it back to you – you give it back. When they actually read it properly then there are more problems two months later... and then you're just having to fix it and change it again."

Students are angry. In certain institutions this has already been a cause of direct conflict, and we need to pay attention to them.

The systemic and funding pressure has been towards a radical increase in numbers of Master's-level students (preferably through non-coursework). This has led to two undesired consequences: firstly, a massification of the system and extreme pressure on supervisors, with the quality of this vital relationship deteriorating; secondly, it has led to the increase in fraudulent ways of acquiring qualifications and getting the right throughput.

F.4 It is recommended that the scholarship/bursary system favouring Master's students be extended to Honours students.

There is a relatively small percentage of students who move from undergraduate to postgraduate studies. The system graduates the majority with third-class passes which, save a few exceptions, leads to non-progression. There is a perception, still to be verified, that the majority of black African graduates in the country are clustered within the

50–59 per cent grades.

There is, thereafter, a sharp decline in numbers of students making it into Honours and a sharper decline into Master's. Only 7.8 per cent of students are at Honours-level registration and only 4.12 per cent are at Masters-level registration; this declines to 0.9 per cent for PhDs. One of the two institutions with the highest requirements for matriculation points permitting entry into HSS study is one of the worst performers in terms of moving its students from their Bachelor's degree to Honours – it only has a 4.2 per cent throughput, which it doubles at Master's level by recruiting students from the rest of the country and/or foreign nationals. This is despite the perception, shared by many, that "on the Honours, I think it's one of the most undervalued degrees and I certainly speak here from the humanities and social sciences in general. I just happen to believe it's such a crucial bridge between undergraduate and postgraduate about the training that students get, whether in the liberal arts, if you like, or all your more vocational and professionalised degrees."

Whereas Honours students tend to complete their degrees, Master's students tend to either take much longer than anticipated (in coursework Master's programmes) or drop out. Very few subsequently move on to a PhD programme, despite the availability of special area scholarships and bursaries.

F.5 The recommendation is that the scholarship/bursary scheme for Master's and PhD students be increased by 30 per cent. This could be facilitated by mandating that third-stream funding provided on a tax-deductible basis by corporate entities be used only for academic and not for administrative purposes. In addition, partial funding for this can be provided by the Education Training and Development Practices SETA.

One of the key concerns has been the level of per capita funding, in bursary and scholarship terms, at Master's and PhD levels. The NRF rates are too low, according to recipients, and they cannot survive without taking on part-time jobs. The fact is that the overwhelming majority of

people registered for full-time PhDs also hold down jobs. It is only through a few international donor contributions that students can afford full-time study. As one student pointed out, "The problem with this postgraduate bursary that they give you is that it merely covers courses, it does not cover anything else, and I think if you are an Honours student or a Master's student or a PhD student, studying is so much more than merely the course fees: it's living, it's paying for your research – it's all those extra costs, it's paying for books, you need money for books and it costs a lot. I'm in a situation where I'm doing research, I am paying for all of it myself and it's costing, it's going to cost about R20 000 or R30 000 for the next two or three months. In a sense this makes it difficult for me, after that I can pay for it but I need the money further along the line as well... and it's impossible." The frustrations are largely shared by academic staff at institutions: "What are the real costs, not in terms of money, rands and cents, but what should a PhD student or a postgrad get money for? Typically most of these bursaries, they give you some kind of lump sum that pays most of your fees or a few things, but they forget the real usage costs – the student has to go out to [do] field-work, of course there's field-work material – has to actually live and be alive and think, you know."

What started out as a consideration of throughput and success rates calls, therefore, for a complex mix of interventions. There is a need to increase the numbers of postgraduates in many priority areas, not only in the system as a whole.

F.6 There is a need to review all qualifications, where this has not yet occurred, in conjunction with SAQA and the CHE: FET qualifications (for critical literacy); BA (for mother tongue and teaching proficiencies); BA, BSocSci and BTech (Creative) for embedding the principles of the Charter; and all other degrees for the mainstreaming of critical, social and deep literacy and hermeneutic capacities in the curriculum.

F.7 It is recommended that the four-year degree be re-visited. This could follow a model of a foundation/bridging year + three-year degree OR a three-year degree + honours year. (To offset possible increases in costs,

mandatory community work is suggested (examples: tutoring undergraduates; teaching in townships, working in writing centres; working in entrepreneurship centres), or making the final year focus on a cross-disciplinary project for teams of students.)

F.8 It is recommended that legislation be amended to facilitate joint degrees and programmes, where joint degrees involve cross-institutional collaboration between two or more institutions on an agreed-upon basis. Joint degrees will be considered by a Joint Degrees Committee consisting of staff from the Humanities Entity, SAQA and the CHE – where these individuals are nationally and internationally recognised in their fields.

F.9 It is recommended that a Higher Education Irregularities Committee (HEIC) be established that is led by the CHE and comprises members from the CHE and other key NQF organisations. The HEIC will be the higher education counterpart of the FET Irregularities Committee led by Umalusi. Its role will be to detect and receive reports on irregularities within higher education, and address all of these irregularities. Irregularities could be reported by HE academics at all levels, and by students at HEIs, and include items such as misuse of intellectual property, supervisory overload and student neglect.

Some of these concerns are apparent in the following input provided in an engagement with students: “So they’ve got Master, Honours, doctorate students, and then undergrad – but then we only have two permanent lecturers. We have one temporary that’s leaving in June. We don’t even know who’s replacing – well, we’ve heard but they haven’t organised everything. We are left with our Honours projects now and some of the supervisors are leaving, because they have to go to finish their dissertations for their doctorates and they’re going to leave in September, and then we’re left with no one. They haven’t told us anything about who’s taking over or not.”

F.10 There is a need to provide a fund for the HSS Deans’ Association and the EDF to create a well integrated system of Diversity and Race, Gender and Xenophobia Thinking workshops. But funds also need to be allocated

to ensure that diversity issues are mainstreamed in the undergraduate curriculum.

F.11 However controversial the NRF may be in some pockets of important opinion, its contributions in two areas are seriously supported by the institutions that have benefited from them: the NRF Chairs and the idea of a Blue Skies Research initiative. Tertiary institution leadership sees them in a positive light, but they are also seen in a negative light by peers and colleagues who feel that valuable people are taken out of teaching in order to develop the research basis of universities.

Although the impact of the NRF Chairs is difficult to evaluate because of their novelty, there is strong support for their expansion. This is the only endogenous push in the HSS towards excellence, and also towards the reproduction of a new corps of young and mostly black academics. There is a pressing discomfort with some of the priority areas – yet, a doubling of the number of Chairs, after serious consultation, will not be resisted, especially if they are in areas of critical need in the university system.

F.12 During our fact-finding visits salary levels between and within the faculty, its departments, and universities was a common issue raised in most institutions. The difference was not only within the faculty, department and university, but also between universities. As one participant stated, “Other universities pay salaries much higher than what we earn, so that’s also another problem that we face at the moment. Because, I mean, in education a lot, I mean, curriculum education we lost a number of good lecturers and from a higher level.”

Such differences have taken on a gender and race dimension in the eyes of those most affected. Salary and working conditions were also then used to compete for skilled and qualified staff within and between universities. Some of those interviewed expressed concern over the “stealing of their staff” because they are a “small university with no resources”.

It was not within our area of activity to research further income-based inequalities, save to note that they were mentioned as an impediment in creating a creative and

scholarly milieu. We agree that this concern should be addressed; that is why we are in support of the HESA initiative to redress institutional salary inequalities, and the attempt to bring academic remuneration in line with the public sector and its New Generation proposals to achieve excellence and equity.

F.13 Most government departments, national, provincial and local, spend billions on know-hows that relate to HSS fields of competence. But most of it is spent on an emerging knowledge economy that is unlinked to the university and tertiary system. The lion's share of this goes primarily to international consultants, who do hire some local expertise. Alongside them, a sizeable local consultancy sector is on the ascendance, absorbing many of our graduates. The majority of tertiary academics involved are mostly acting in their personal capacities, and some earn significant emoluments over and above their salaries.

There is a statutory institution in South Africa, the HSRC, that was supposed to be the lynchpin for provision of the research and knowledge needed by the state in all its tiers. At the moment it has to compete with the private sector and with international consortia to make up much of its budgetary needs. Although this might have made the HSRC lean, mean, productive and effective, it defeats the purpose of having a state-sponsored research organisation.

There has to be a revision of the government's knowledge procurement policy that strengthens both statutory institutions like the HSRC and policy/application-oriented, planning and data-gathering institutions at the university level. This is for short-term reasons, but also for long-term capacity building if it is pursued vigorously. If the necessity of knowledge partnerships is increasing, so is the need to have serious centres of applied research and of public and private data banks.

We propose that 20 per cent of knowledge-linked state expenditure at national, provincial and local levels is expended on partnerships with the HSRC, and HSRC partnerships with universities and tertiary institutions or

university centres and units in HSS faculties.

Not only will there be revolutionary resource implications but this will bring researchers within the governmental apparatus closer to researchers in the tertiary and civil society sector:

F.14 There is a concern expressed in 16 of the 23 institutions that although they are mindful of their responsibilities, most scholars feel that their rights are being eroded via crass forms of "managerialism". One experience of a young academic was explained as follows: "I finished my Master's three years ago and I am supervising eight Master's students. In terms of the pressure to finish a doctorate, do Master's, I've got an insane undergrad teaching load as well. And, oh, and the administrative thing. I have not met a lecturer who likes the admin or who's in fact good at it, because most lecturers are kind of, and I know, I'm one of them, are kind of 'head in the clouds', want to spend a lot of time thinking about their research. And I think that it's a really big loss for the kind of quality of the work."

In exploring whether such issues could be dealt with within the existing labour relations and Constitutional dispensation, the Task Team understood that issues pertaining to academic freedom and integrity go beyond the former, and are too vaguely asserted in the latter. They allude to issues beyond the employer–employee relationship, and even though contracts of employment are supposed to be clear on the balance between rights, ethical conduct and responsibilities, they are rarely helpful.

On the African continent, there is the Kampala Declaration that addresses the issues directly from an African perspective, but it has not been adopted by governments or tertiary institutions; and where South Africa is a signatory of international conventions or declarations, for example UNESCO conventions, there are instruments and recommendations but no catholic declaration covering these issues.

It would be important for HESA to lead a consortium of relevant institutional experts to draft such a Bill, or lead the initiative for the drafting of such a Bill.

## Conclusion

The recommendations of the Task Team address the identified problem areas by refusing to “inscend” into them, but rather “transcend” them from a standpoint of what is potentially positive about the HSS fields of inquiry in the present and in the future. As is obvious therefore, the 14 interventions outlined in section F address the problems directly, and will have serious implications for resource allocation. It is unfeasible to continue with the existing patterns of first-year education, the “killing fields”; it is unethical to accept deserving students, especially from disadvantaged communities, into the system and not make loans available to them; it is irresponsible to have students of diverse cultural formations from within and outside the country without well designed diversity- and dignity-linked interactions; it is unacceptable that they are taught by a recalcitrant and disaffected community of lecturers; it is impossible to imagine that South Africa cannot weave together a strong Honours, Master’s and PhD cohort of students, given the resources that the country has put at the universities’ disposal. These interventions are crucial, but they are not the substance of what a great educational system in the HSS might be.

They cannot be thought about without the interventions discussed in section E above. They would be a flash in the pan if they were not encased by the integrity of the project as a whole, and here, as concerns the HSS, the onus will have to be on the two deans’ associations – SAHUDA and the EDF. The vice-chancellors’ forum, HESA, has to balance the integrity of all the fields. So it will have to be the dialogue between faculty leaderships and professional associations, where all academics should belong, that may guarantee, indeed ought to guarantee, integrity. Here, four of the most vital ingredients have to be sorted out: the funding and reward system; the discrimination conundrum of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, xenophobia and, very importantly, class; the HSS curriculum; and the quality of community engagement appropriate for any site. It would be impossible to arrive at a transformed, meaningful and challenging take on the HSS without a

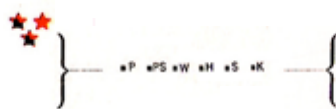
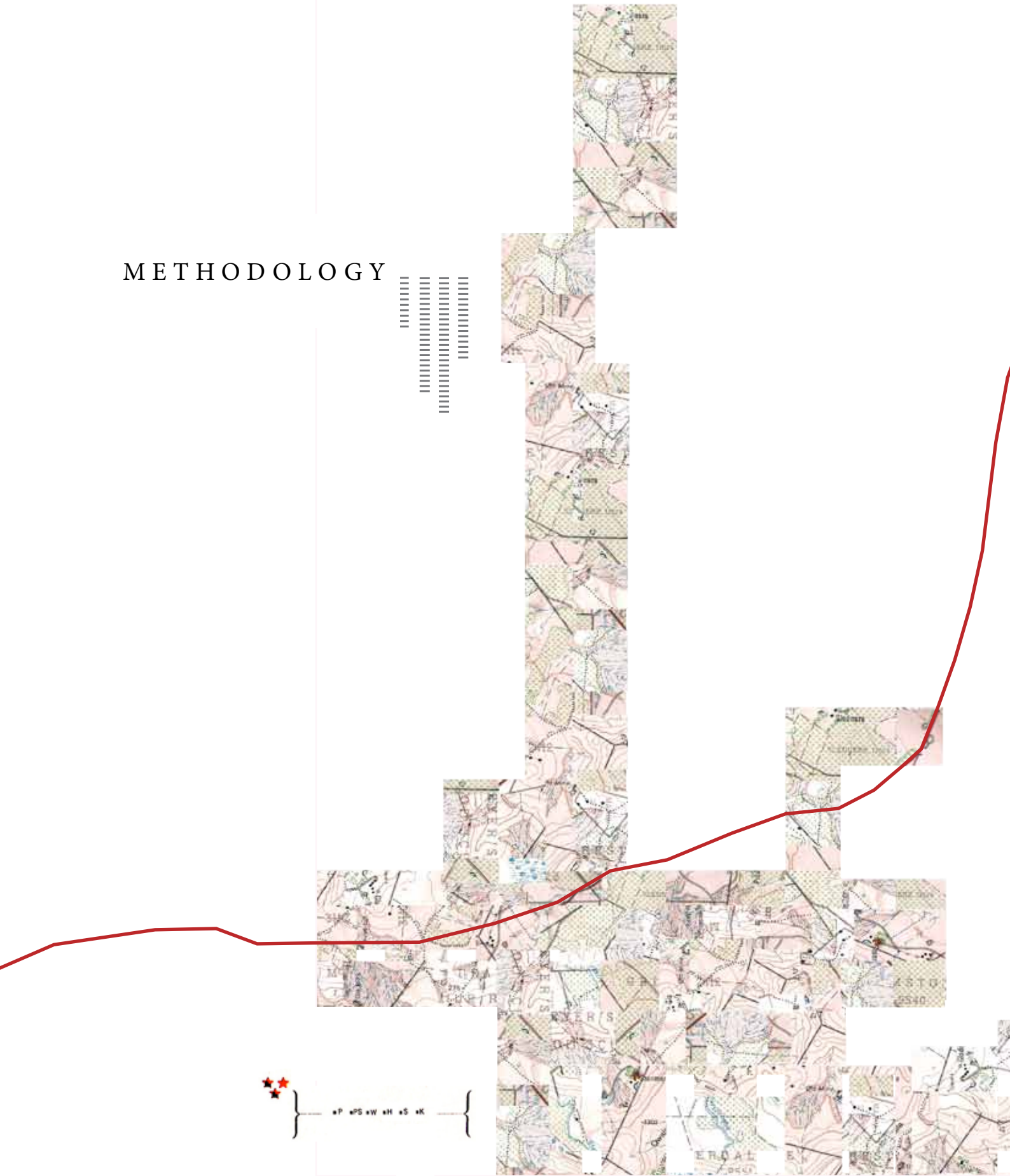
series of Catalytic Projects of the kind discussed in section D, that will help establish our dignified presence in the world of knowledge. Such research projects will establish how serious the claim is that we are not driftwood and that we come from a long way back, transform the way we think of belonging and heritage, and deal with the local contribution to global concern about our interconnected pasts, presents and futures. All such catalytic projects will demand cross-province and cross-university collaborations on a significant scale.

All the above have to be framed within the interventions set out in section C that concern relevance, studentship and success. The majority of students entering the system will be neither researchers nor academics. Our system requires new generations of leaders, professionals, knowledge workers, activists, performers and entrepreneurs will emerge to animate society and its well-being. It is in the spirit of an open and student-centred system that new generations of competent individuals will enter the economy and society. Such capacities need to be nurtured. It should be obvious by now that the intervention aims to encourage, through its African Renaissance Programme, the idea that our continental future is both our local and our global future. The university system can only thrive through complex, well planned and identity-enhancing interactions with our SADC neighbours, with African colleagues and students, with thinkers and learners from the Global South and with meaningful relations, on the basis of what we aspire to, with the “North”.

Finally, what will dynamise the entire system into achieving the “transcendence” necessary is the intervention set out in section A: the Academy and its ability to drive HSS scholarship to new heights.

Our proposals are complex, interrelated and worthy, we feel, of generations to come. If the social sciences and the humanities emerged in Europe as the necessary epistemic configurations of ordering human behaviour; if our own past in Africa speaks of an emergence of the necessary epistemic configurations to order natives and inscribe settlers as their referent; perhaps we are in a space to think of the HSS in this post-apartheid period as the necessary epistemic configurations to imagine a human being through the interplay of quality and freedom, beyond the grip of race, gender and other derogations.

# METHODOLOGY





## METHODOLOGY

Through a combination of quantitative work and a qualitative set of encounters we explored the challenges and successes of the social sciences and humanities in South Africa's higher education system, and attempted to create a clear road map of specific interventions aimed at rejuvenating and strengthening scholarship.

Our interactions were designed to capture a multiplicity of voices through consultations with local stakeholders, as well as with local and international centres of excellence. Approximately 1 400 individuals were spoken to, interviewed and recorded through a series of activities:

- institutional fact-finding visits;
- local stakeholder workshops and interviews;
- an international conference and interviews;
- consultation with individuals and groups in civil society;
- review of key documents;
- public participation.

**Institutional fact-finding visits.** The fact-finding visits were designed to engage qualitatively with various groups representing the HSS at higher education institutions in South Africa. These visits took place in all twenty-three South African higher education institutions (including universities and universities of technology). The formats of the visits varied, based on the uniqueness of each institution. All universities were contacted via their vice-chancellor's office and the relevant deans were tasked with organising and recruiting participants for the fact-finding visits.

Generally, the fact-finding visits included an initial hour-long meeting with the Dean of Humanities/Social Sciences/Arts and/or Education and other invited members of staff, followed by plenary sessions with a broader range of participants (selected primarily from the relevant faculty/ies) – including heads of departments, faculty members, and postgraduate students. Follow-up interviews were also conducted with individuals who were unable to attend the scheduled meeting, and with those who were present at

these meetings but wanted to raise further issues. We also followed up interviews with private education institutions.

The specific focus of each visit was the unique challenges facing HSS at each of the institutions, perceived strengths and innovative projects (research, art projects, and many others). Detailed notes were taken and most of these interactions were recorded and transcribed, but no individuals' names appear on the transcripts, to protect their identity. All transcripts were thematically analysed and grouped into 20 problem areas which allowed us to deepen our investigation.

The fact-finding visits commenced in October 2011 and ended in May 2011. Table 1 lists the dates of all fact-finding visits.

**Local stakeholder workshops and interviews:** The first stakeholder workshop was held on 18 February 2011. Participants consisted primarily of deans of Humanities/Arts/Social Sciences as well as Education. In addition, a few professional associations were represented, along with other bodies whose mandates fall within the field of higher education. Participants were asked to engage in discussions beyond their individual institutional purviews by taking a broader, more systemic approach, to engage with the challenges facing the HSS in South Africa and to begin the process of developing innovative responses to these challenges.

The second stakeholder workshop took place on 6 May 2011. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss and improve the Charter's Working Paper 1 (Challenges). Participants were asked to discuss the six themes identified in the Working Paper:

- Integrity of the HSS in South Africa
- Studentship
- "Graduateness"
- Excellence
- Relevance
- Dynamising the fields of study in the HSS.

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Name of institution	Date of visit
1. Cape Peninsula University of Technology	12 December 2010
2. Central University of Technology	14 April 2011
3. Durban University of Technology	24 February 2011
4. Mangosuthu University of Technology	17 May 2011
5. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University	3 February 2011
6. North West University	25 March 2011
7. Rhodes University	4 February 2011
8. Stellenbosch University	23 November 2010
9. Tshwane University of Technology	12 April 2011
10. University of Cape Town	16 March 2011
11. University of Fort Hare	11 February 2011
12. University of Johannesburg	17 February 2011
13. University of KwaZulu-Natal	29 October 2010
14. University of Limpopo	11 November 2011
15. University of Pretoria	17 March 2011
16. University of South Africa	24 March 2011
17. University of the Free State	10 February 2011
18. University of the Western Cape	14 February 2011
19. University of the Witwatersrand	18 March 2011
20. University of Venda	10 March 2011
21. University of Zululand	25 February 2011
22. Vaal University of Technology	13 April 2011
23. Walter Sisulu University	3 March 2011

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Table 1: CHSS fact-finding visits – October 2010–May 2011

The workshop identified further challenges and added draft recommendations. Individual interviews were also conducted with key experts who attended the workshops.

The inputs from the two stakeholder workshops formed the basis for developing and refining the Charter's Working Paper I (Challenges) and Working Paper II (Recommendations). The Task Team was given the mandate to draft a Charter for the Humanities and Social Sciences which contains very bold recommendations.

**International workshop and interviews:** The workshop took place on June 2–3 2011; its purpose was to discuss successes and failures of HSS initiatives internationally, and to give time and space for the group to refine the preamble, the principles and the recommendations of the Charter for the Humanities and Social Sciences in South Africa. Present at the workshop were various international organisations, including CODESRIA and UNESCO, the International Social Science Council, the Director of the Gubelkian Report on the Humanities and Social Science, as well as many key experts. Working Paper II (Recommendation) was tabled, discussed and refined during this workshop.

Additional key informant interviews were also conducted with international experts who attended the workshops. Other interviews were conducted with international experts who were unable to come to the workshop.

**Consultation with individuals and groups in civil society:** These were individuals and organisations who have some relationship with HSS programmes under way at universities, and/or who see their own development as related to (or happening in partnership with) such programmes. Together with the Wolpe Trust and Inyathelo Institute, small focus group discussions were conducted in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg to try to understand how constituencies outside the university might see their relationship to the programmes of universities. The identified broad themes for discussion, relating to the HSS, included amongst others the following:

- The existing relationship between individuals, organisations and universities (with regard to research, education, recruiting, advocacy, funding etc.)
- How to bridge the gaps between universities and organisations
- The role of the HSS in society today
- Recommendations for the Ministry.

**Review of key documents:** Numerous documents were sourced, including research reports, government policy documents and various reports from the 23 universities. Specific documents were also requested from the deans of the faculties. These were mainly quantitative reports on all degrees offered by the faculty (including BA, BSocSc, BTech, BEd, MA and PhD), on issues such as:

- the number of students registered for each degree at all levels;
- the demographics of students in the faculty, including MA and PhD students (age, gender, race, nationality);
- the total number of students of the university (for calculating proportions);
- the number of academic staff in the faculty of Humanities/Arts/Social Sciences/Education (specifying contract/permanent staff);
- the total number of academics in the university (specifying contract/permanent staff);
- the ratio of academic to administrative staff.

In addition, quantitative reports on the faculties' application, recruitment and acceptance ratios were requested. On funding, the following information (reports) was also sourced from most institutions:

- DHET funding to the university as a whole;
- the proportion allocated to the faculty;
- DST funding to the university as a whole;
- the proportion of funds allocated to the faculty;
- research grants held by faculty members.

Interviews were also conducted with individuals representing various organisations which were not able to participate in the scheduled group discussions.

Public participation: Public comments were also solicited through the Charter for Humanities and Social Sciences website. A call for comments on the draft Charter was circulated. The Task Team received numerous comments from the general public on the importance of the project, successes and mostly challenges at various institutions of higher learning. The Task Team has recommended that most of the feedback, especially that relating to institutional challenges, should be addressed through a series of Corrective Interventions, including establishment of a new Higher Education Irregularities Committee (HEIC) led by the CHE to act as an ombudsperson.

As was inevitable, a large number of individuals who felt constrained to speak to us in public, or missed the meetings, or felt strongly about specific issues, wrote to us directly and we have preserved full anonymity in such cases.

The draft recommendations were circulated to 45 international scholars in the fields of HSS, of whom 12 responded substantively and 15 noted their warm support for the work undertaken.

### **Research Challenges**

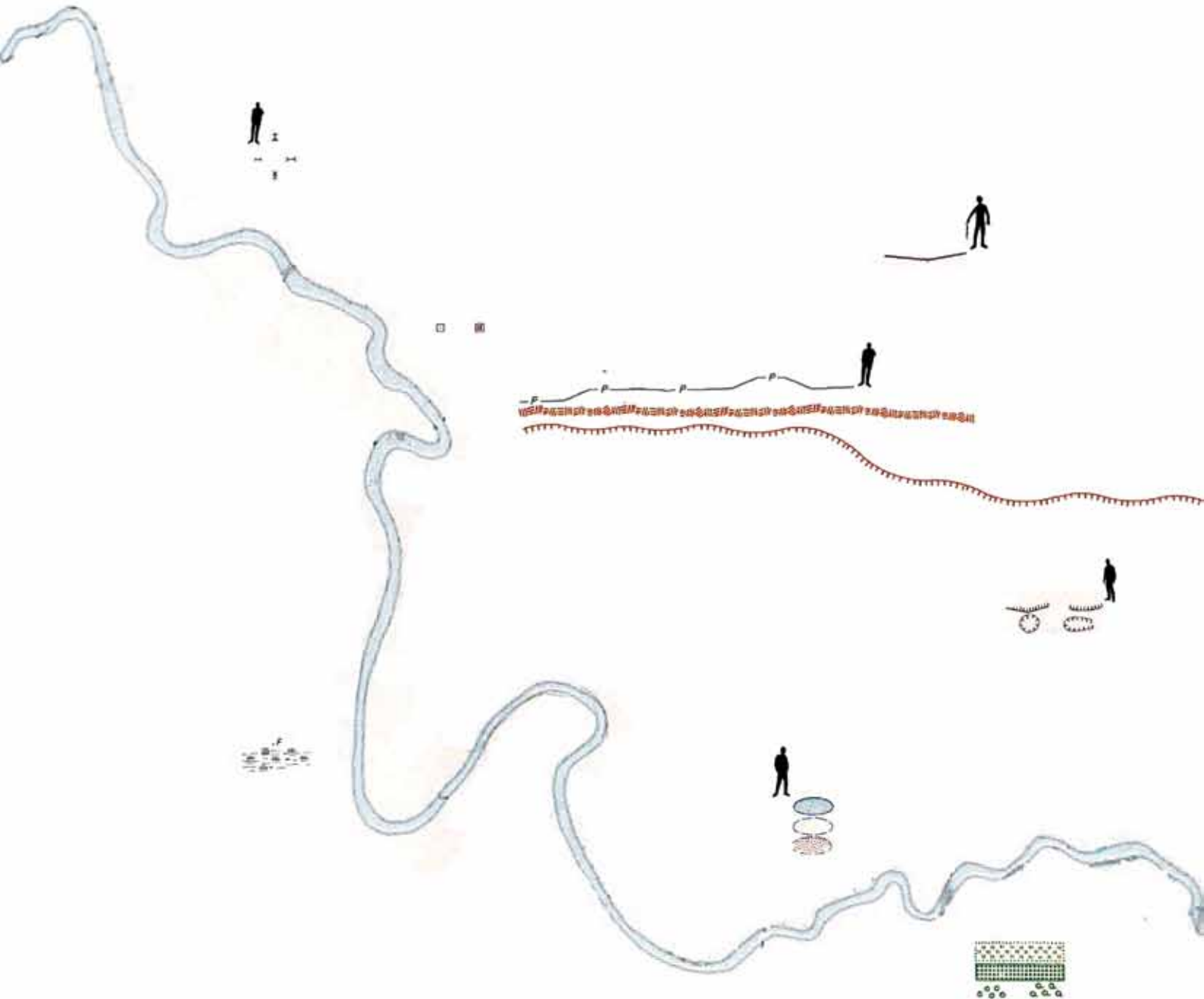
The major factors that compromised the gathering of data included inconvenient timing of the fact-finding visits, time limitations of the entire project, and the reluctance by some universities and other institutions to participate and provide

requested information. While every effort was made to include most individuals, groups and institutions, the timing of the project and time constraints on the part of many participants meant that some who wanted to participate were unintentionally left out. Numerous attempts to access some universities' and other institutions' information (reports and research) were unsuccessful. These institutions declined to send the requested information. Noting that our institutional visits coincided with universities' normal and special activities (teaching, seminars, examinations, vacation time, faculty and curriculum reviews), it was therefore understandable why some individuals were unable to participate. Regardless of this constraint, it was apparent that some institutions were reluctant to participate and hence individuals were not informed of the institutional visit, and thus not invited to participate in the plenary discussions. Numerous alternative avenues for participation were provided for by the Task Team, and those left out in the institutional visit process, were encouraged to participate in these other ways.

The Task Team is, however, confident that enough voices have been listened to and represented in this report.

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# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



## THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation process consists of three cycles that will take place over a three-year period.

August–December 2011: A Working Team establishes the interim entities, committees and projects, appoints personnel and finalises the funding requirements for each of them.

January–December 2012: The Acting Council and Directorate of the Academy/Institute, the National Centre for Lifelong Education and Educational Opportunities, and the committees set to work and establish the constitutional, legal and fiduciary responsibilities of each programme, process and entity. The Virtual Schools are fully functional and the Catalytic Projects are active.

January–December 2013: The official entities are in place and the institutions begin the planning for Phase 2, 2013–2015.

### **Cycle One (August–December 2011)**

The Working Team is constituted from the Task Team and the existing Reference Group. While the Working Team's role is to facilitate the initial phase to kick-start the process, it will be accountable to the Council once it is appointed, until the Director of the Academy decides they are no longer required.

One of the key activities is to do the groundwork for the various Corrective Interventions (see section F of the Recommendations). Given the great divergence of activities involved, this would focus on developing plans of action to hand over to the Ad hoc Project Coordinator in Cycle Two. The Working Team needs to develop a working relationship with the Dean's associations and with the DHET and DST to refine the recommendations for all the necessary Catalytic Projects operations (see Recommendations in section D).

Another responsibility will be to initiate a feasibility study to establish the operational relationships with existing institutions. Negotiations must also be carried out with

key organisations such as SAQA, and consultations with the relevant stakeholders (FET and HET institutions, the DHET etc.) undertaken, before the design of the Centre is submitted for approval and implementation. This will lead to the establishment of an interim structure for the Centre. The Working Team will assist in setting up the African Renaissance Programme by facilitating a process to identify an African Renaissance Programme Coordinator, who will be appointed by the Council/Director of the Academy in 2012. During the first phase of the implementation plan, the Working Team will work closely with the Programme Coordinator to establish a Pan-African consortium of universities. The establishment of the consortium is key to developing a continental HSS postgraduate programme that permits African students to study for a semester in other African countries on an exchange basis. The Working Team will also assist in facilitating a consultative process to establish a framework for joint degrees.

Ideally, such a programme should be coordinated by the NRF – therefore crucial inter-ministerial discussions should be facilitated.

The Working Team will facilitate a process to identify members who can serve on the interim council of the Academy (later to become a formal, legal Council with nine members, who are appointed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Training in an interim capacity). The Working Team will draft a descriptor for the positions. Council members should be distinguished academics or practitioners in the field of HSS.

The Working Team will assist in identifying a pool of distinguished Emeriti, of whom ultimately 10 will be invited to participate in the national mentoring programme for postgraduate supervision by the Director of the Academy. Each Virtual School will be assigned two Emeriti professors. The Working Team will liaise and negotiate with the deans in the different provinces to determine where the five Virtual Schools should be housed. The Council will appoint 10 coordinators, 2 coordinators per school. The role of the coordinator is to develop a comprehensive plan of action to establish the Virtual Schools under the guidance/

supervision of the Academy and Council (i.e. identify core teams for each of the Virtual Schools, create budgets, develop research plans, establish virtual networks across institutions etc.).

The entities are constructed for an Acting Phase; over and above the nine-person interim Council in terms of the Academy/Institute, a six-person Committee will be appointed for the Centre, whose work would be to support an appointed Interim Director to kick-start the process and to be ready to commence work in 2012.

### **Cycle Two (2012)**

The Acting Council of the Academy and its Acting Director (seconded from the existing system) will be in place.

An Ad hoc Coordinator will be appointed to coordinate, plan and implement the 14 Corrective Interventions.

With respect to establishing the National Committees (see Recommendations A.5-A.12), 11 Chairs need to be identified by the Council. The Assistant Director will be responsible for this initiative.

The role of the Director and Assistant Director of the Academy and the Acting Council is primarily to start the virtual schools, and to formalise the existence of the Academy and Acting Council. The Acting Council will be responsible for defining the de jure new institution, its legal status and its accountability. All entities will be operational in an acting capacity for the year, working out the constitutional, legal and fiduciary responsibilities of each programme, process and entity. The Virtual Schools will be fully functional and the Catalytic Projects will be active.

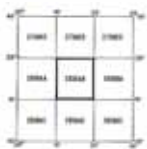
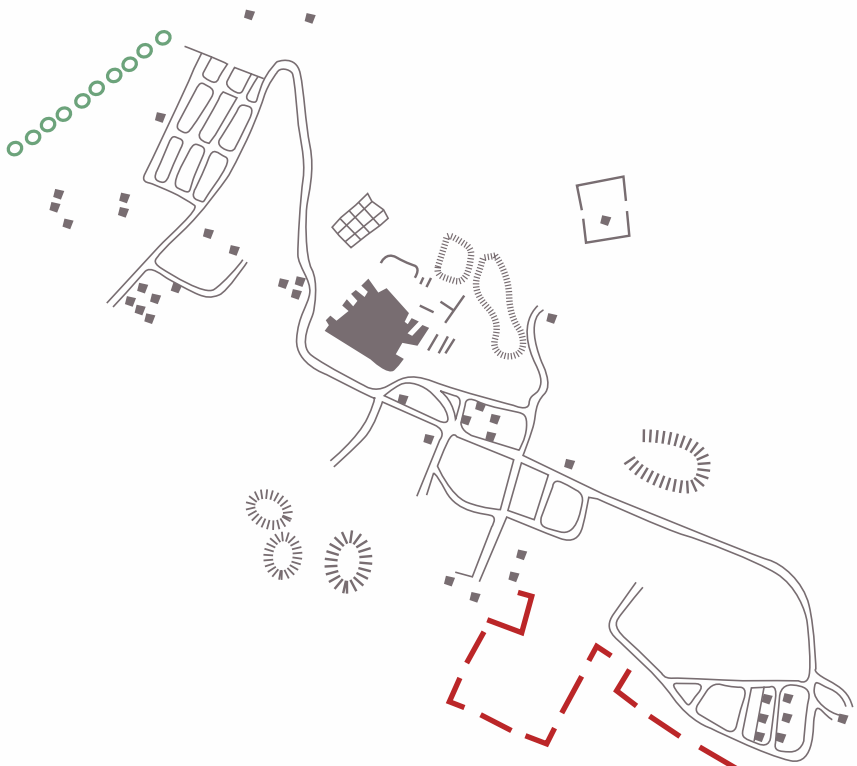
By the end of the year a proper public participation process will be involved in the nomination process to appoint Councils and Committees and to employ the relevant personnel.

The Director of the Academy needs to oversee project/ planning meetings, with the assistance of experts in all

fields. In the course of the year Assistant Directors of the Academy, Coordinators, Ad hoc Project Coordinators etc. will be taking on responsibilities and ownership of initiatives outlined in the recommendations.

### **Cycle Three (2013)**

All programmes, activities and processes are occurring under bona fide directorates and overseeing structures.

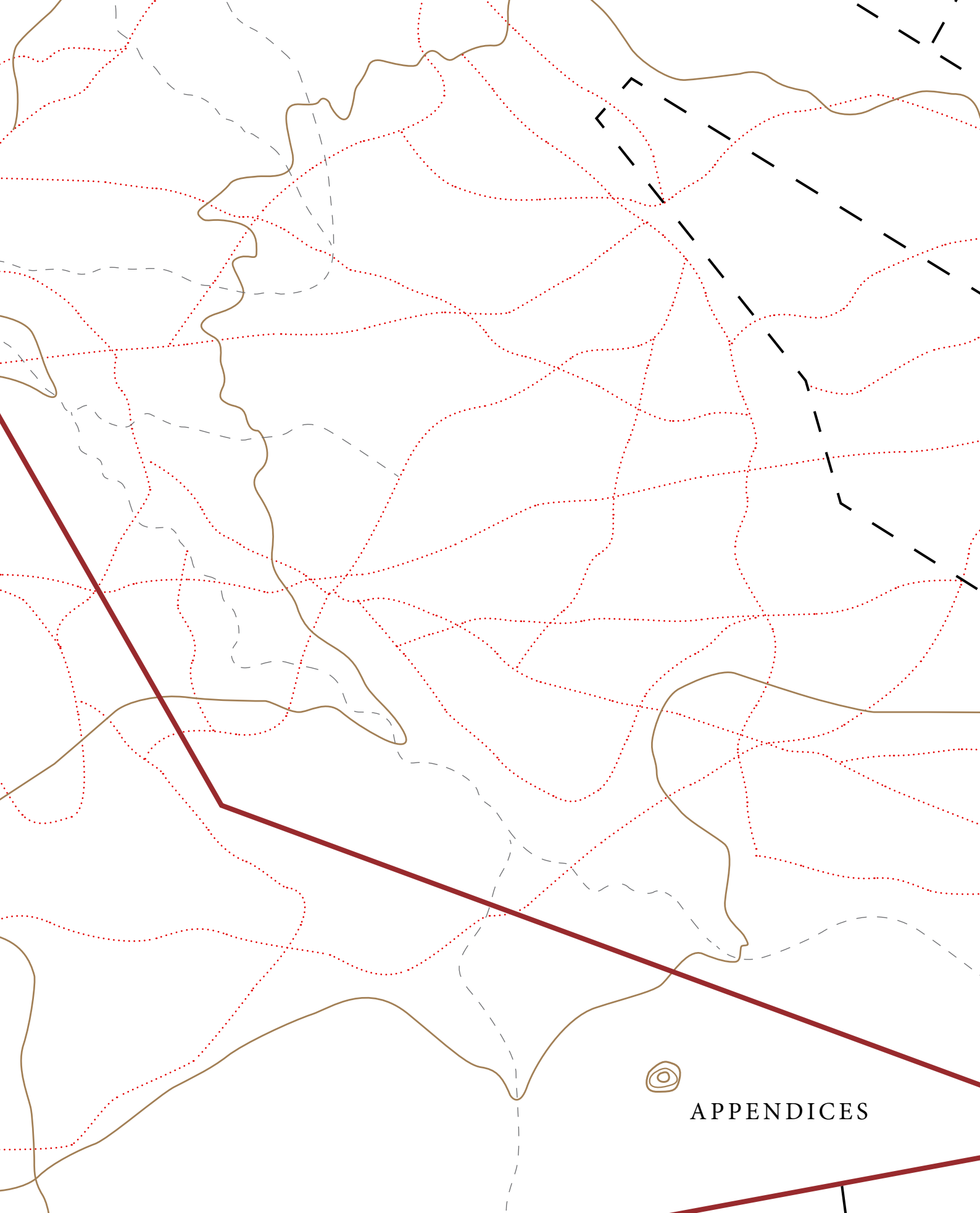


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APPENDICES

## APPENDICES

**A thank you note**

We are grateful to all the vice-chancellors, HSS deans and their administrators for assisting us in setting up the fact-finding visits at their institutions. We would like to thank all faculty staff members and students who so generously took the time to share information with us. Your participation and contributions were critical to the process. Thank you to Prof. Fikile Mazibuko, Dr Saleem Badat, Prof. Derrick Swartz, Prof. Joseph Ayee and Prof. Ahmed Bawa for your invaluable contributions. Thank you to Prof Johan Ras for trying to help us out of rubber bullets, burning barricades and a hail of stones. A special thank you to the Director of the Harold Wolpe Trust, Dr Lionel Louw, the Director of Inyathelo, Ms Shelagh Gastrow and Ms Nise Malange for organising focus groups with key stakeholders. Thanks to all and especially Prof. Peter Vale and Prof. Fred Hendricks who invited the team to special talks/forums/conferences that they deemed relevant for the CHSS process.

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And last but certainly not least, to our reference group members who were with us almost from the beginning of this project, we cannot state strongly enough how thankful we are for your ongoing engagement, constructive feedback and guidance throughout the process.

CHSS Task Team, 2011



### **Media Statement on the development of a Humanities and Social Sciences Charter**

Higher Education and Training Minister Dr Blade Nzimande has launched a new initiative to rejuvenate and strengthen the social sciences and humanities in South Africa's higher education system. A team led by Professor Ari Sitas from the University of Cape Town, and assisted by Dr Sarah Moetsa from the University of the Witwatersrand, has been appointed to develop a charter aimed at affirming the importance of human and social forms of scholarship.

These areas have increasingly been downplayed as a result of the priority focus on natural sciences, technology and business studies. Since 1994, government has focused attention on developing 'scarce and critical skills'. While supporting these initiatives, Minister Nzimande has become concerned with the relative neglect of the social sciences and humanities in universities and other post-school institutions.

Prof. Sitas' team will examine existing initiatives and explore innovative programmes in South Africa as well as in other developing and developed societies. As part of the initial phase of the project a South African reference group has been established to advise and assist the task team. An international reference group is in the process of being established and will include leading academics from Brazil, China, France, India, Jordan, the Netherlands, Norway, Senegal, and the USA.

Launching the project, Minister Nzimande said the social sciences and humanities played an extremely important role in South Africa's liberation struggle in undermining apartheid pseudo-science and apartheid history, as well as helping to reclaim and build democratic traditions.

"Social and political theory have been central to creating an understanding of how our society has functioned, and the work of South African social scientists, historians and writers was of great assistance in helping our leaders and people to guide our struggle. In the last two decades, the social sciences and humanities have taken a back seat.

"Now is the time for the teaching of and research in the social sciences and the humanities to take their place again

at the leading edge of our struggle for transformation and development of South African society. They must play a leading role in helping our people understand and tackle the scourges of poverty, unemployment, racism, discrimination of all kinds and HIV/AIDS," Minister Nzimande said.

"At a deeper level, we also look to our social scientists, philosophers, historians, artists and others to help us to rebuild our sense of nationhood, our independence and our ability to take our place proudly in the community of nations. We should not only be consumers of theory from the developed world. We should also become more active producers of social theory and of art, helping assert our intellectual and artistic independence while continuing to engage our colleagues from both the developed countries and from the developing world, especially the former colonies," he said.

Minister Nzimande said the task team would provide guidance on a way forward to strengthening social sciences and humanities and enhancing quality in this key sector of higher education in the country.

Prof. Sitas said the decline in these areas of scholarship was palpable. "All the professional associations and stakeholders in the broader humanities have been voicing concerns through the Academy of Science of South Africa (Assaf) and through their respective associations. Higher education bodies have been raising the alarm both about the quality and quantity of our PhD endeavours", Prof. Sitas said.

He said his team has instituted processes that will provide the Department of Higher Education and Training with a charter of key interventions for the social sciences and humanities by June 2011. As part of fact-finding, workshops and interviews will be held with local stakeholders (Assaf, Deans, Vice-Chancellors, Research Directors), and scholarly encounter of leading academics in the global south will be invited to share their expertise.

Issued by: Ministry of Higher Education and Training  
Enquiries: Ranjeni Munusamy  
Head of Communications  
Ministry of Higher Education and Training,  
Tel: 012-3125555 (PTA) 021-4655513 (CT)  
Cell: 0725712812, email: munusamy.r@dhet.gov.za

## Appendix C: Project Brief – Charter for Humanities and Social Sciences

Ari Sitas

It is a cruel fact that in the last 15 years the Humanities and the Social Sciences have been severely affected by the dire need to respond to the obvious deficit in engineering, natural scientific, informational and managerial needs.

This downscaling of the importance of the human and social forms of scholarship has had a serious effect on the quality of mind of our senior graduates, on the academic enterprise itself and on the quality of our research output. The reduction of heritage at worst to the market and at best to tourism has made for a lot of decoration but very little substance.

This has impacted on the quality of leadership in government and non-governmental institutions, in the university system and in many key social responsibility areas.

At a time when we are asked to play a leading conceptual and scientific role as Africans together with other developing societies in the “south” and on our continent, and to solve our local challenges, the decline in these areas of scholarship is palpable, the depth of talent is too narrow and the nurturing of talent from disadvantaged communities a matter of exception rather than the rule – a matter of quantity rather than quality.

The alarm bells have been ringing for some time:

All the professional associations and stake-holders in the broader humanities have been voicing concerns through the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) and through their respective associations.

Higher education bodies have been raising the alarm both about the quality and quantity of our PhD endeavours.

High-profile cases about the quality of our degrees and alarming levels of plagiarism reported through the media have tarnished many universities. Part of the pressure is also linked to irate degree holders whose integrity has been threatened by such tarnishing.

The necessary work of creating post-apartheid forms of thinking, of heritage and scholarship has been reduced to shocking and enduring cultural stereotypes.

It is in this light that a Humanities and Social Sciences intervention is necessary and has been turned into a Special Project by the Ministry of Higher Education and Training. It

has instituted processes that will provide a Charter (of key interventions) for the Humanities and Social Sciences by the end of June 2011 – a Charter that will be focused on addressing the challenges and on nurturing excellence.

The team will conduct a feasibility study and consultations with local stakeholders, and with local and international centres of excellence, and will arrive at a number of recommendations for the Ministry that may involve, inter alia:

- The creation of a new premier institution or a number of new institutions unencumbered by the past; and/or
- the enhancement of the existing system of tertiary institutions in the Humanities/Social Sciences and the encouragement of its diversity and growth.

In the former case the key lessons of successful models from developing societies (India and China, for example) will be sought alongside the obvious examples of excellence in the West, without for a moment forgetting that we are to address everything from the priorities of both the sense and sensibility that animates the southernmost tip of Africa. In the latter case key existing success models and initiatives will be sought that need to be transplanted and nurtured throughout the system.

Fact-finding will involve:

- local stakeholder workshops and interviews (ASSAf, the discipline-based and cross-discipline-based associations, deans and faculty initiatives that are seen to be breaking new ground, vice-chancellors and research directors – from the large-scale national research bodies to sector-specific programmes and initiatives);
- an international forum where key institutional leaders are involved in sharing their experiences (for example, the Smithsonian, the Anthropological Museum of Mexico, the Nehru Memorial Museum, the Cairo Museum, and the Chinese Academy of the Social Sciences) and how their heritage excellence is linked to academic scholarship, as well as the International Social Science and Humanities Councils (UNESCO, Paris);
- scholarly encounters with leading academics in the “Global South” where they are invited to share their experience and expertise.



CONVERSION TABLE

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