



Public Sector Reforms and Policy Making: A Case of Education in a Democratic Developmental South Africa

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Thrust of the paper

- ✓ Perspectives on Public Sector Reforms and public policy making within the context of a developmental state
- ✓ Key focus area: resultant 'outcomes' of reforms within the education sector
- ✓ Not an empirical analysis of any specific area
- ✓ Particular focus on the schooling system and Higher Education (HE) sector
- ✓ Political economy of education reforms: why?/ where?/'outcomes'



1. Background

Public Sector Reforms



- From traditional model to New Public Management
- management of public services with principles/practices synonymous with the private sector or market economy
- “ a move away from input controls, rules, and procedures towards output measurement and performance targets- the accountability framework; the devolution of management control with improved reporting and monitoring mechanisms; a performance for private sector ownership, contestable provision, and contracting out of publicly funded services ; the adoption of private sector management practices in the public sector , such as short term contracts, performance linked remuneration schemes” Bale and Dale (1998:119)
- Appealing elements: planning, efficiency, accountability, culture, “citizen centered” service delivery



- Schick (1998) and Graud (2003) criticism of donor sponsored NPM in Africa due to “prescriptive nature”
- Failure due to unsuitable political, economic climate, arbitrary adoption, no local ownership e.g. DRC, Zambia, Ethiopia
- South Africa relatively successful, “advanced reformer”, “integrated government” (three spheres, cluster system)
- Manifests in MTSF/MTEC, PFMA, various agencies (SASSA, UYF), contracting, decentralization etc
- Progress in achieving developmental goals
- Attention on implementation plans, mindset shift of public servants, skills enhancement, performance rewards



SA a developmental state?

- ✓ The concept of a *democratic developmental state* entails: democratic political system, focus on economic growth, developmental goals, good governance, sufficient state capacity, interventionism, autonomous institutional attributes, etc
- ✓ Democracy and good governance - Constitution: separation of powers, peaceful elections, participation of citizens, human rights, etc
- ✓ Socio-economic objectives - Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), Growth, Employment And Redistribution Strategy, Accelerated and Shared Growth Strategy of South Africa (ASGISA)
- ✓ Conducive institutional arrangements based on the concept of "embedded autonomy": autonomous state agencies working coherently to promote developmental goals and embedded through strong, strategic partnerships with social partners-alliance partners and private sector.



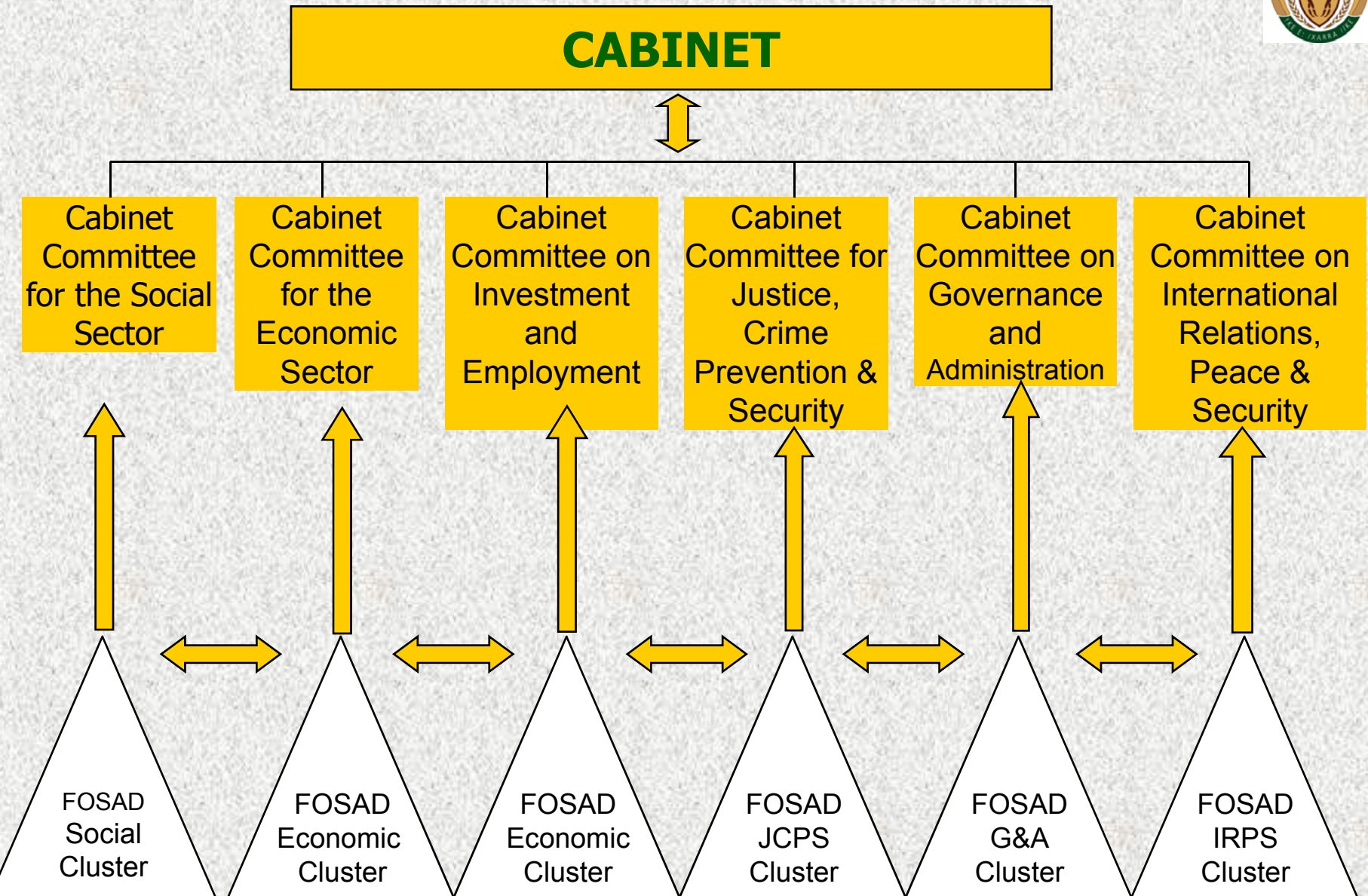
Policy making In South Africa (1998 – 2008)



Policy making and implementation – institutional mechanisms

- ✓ Executive
- ✓ Legislature (NA, NCOP)
- ✓ Presidency's Policy Unit
- ✓ Clusters and Cabinet Committees
- ✓ Presidential Working Groups
- ✓ Non-State Actors etc

Cabinet, Cabinet Committees and Clusters





2. Main Points

Policy

**Reforms in education since
1994**



Policy reforms in education

Why general schooling and HE?

- ✓ Both are intrinsic to the attainment of some of South Africa's major socio-economic objectives:
 - Addressing rampant unemployment (over 50 % for youth FYR 2008)
 - Forging SA as formidable economy within the global economic system
- ✓ Honest reflection for accurate diagnosis of the current situation NB for further planning
- ✓ Quality of future leadership predicated on these institutions



Context

- ✓ Democratic government inherited a system highly fraught with racial imbalances, fragmented (19 education departments!)
- ✓ 4 major tasks for government
 - Forming a unified system (1 national department and 9 provincial departments)
 - Allocating budgetary/human/infrastructure resources in line with the compulsory schooling for all



Context contd.

- Develop the National Qualifications Framework (DoE and DoL)
- Other additional developmental interventions: curriculum, open learning, special education needs, ABET and ECD
- ✓ Policies on ECD, ABET, Special needs and FET education developed in recognition of prevailing developmental challenges
- ✓ Principles and objectives of reform policies articulated in most education policies. They became synonymous with progressive terminology such as equity, democracy, non-racialism, non-sexism and generally non-discriminatory

2.1. Highlights in the subsectors



- ✓ Progress in improving accessibility and addressing illiteracy, skills development
- ✓ Kraak (2008) progress visible in increased access, headcount enrolments, increased investment by government and the private sector, institutional rationalization processes and regulation
- ✓ OECD Review (2008) acknowledges that what has been achieved in 14 years is remarkable
- ✓ Expansion of ECD and FET sectors (recapitalization)
- ✓ Development Indicators (2008) illiteracy is improving, in 2005 74% of adults were literate
- ✓ GHS 2007 data: average of 87%, 89% rate males and 86% females



Highlights contd.

	Adult Literacy Rate
All	87%
Women	86%
Men	89%
Poorest 20% primary	75%
Poorest 50% secondary	83%

**Adult Literacy Rates
GHS 2007, Own calculations**



Highlights cntd

- ✓ Projected target of 4.7 million illiterate adults in next five years through gvnt's Kha Ri Khude (Let us Learn) campaign
- ✓ Many scholars identify a strong link between education and socio-economic mobility: education key for youth development

2.2. General Schooling System



- ✓ Reforms to “deracialise” education and advance redress and equity
- ✓ Decentralization with “cooperative governance” between 3 spheres of gvnt/ role of School Governing Bodies
- ✓ Enhanced access: “no-fee” schools
- ✓ Compulsory schooling for all races
- ✓ Introduction of new curriculum Outcomes based Education (politically, socially sensible)



Highlights

- ✓ Significant achievements but challenges remain Bloch (2006)
- ✓ Trends dependant on multi-factoral basis: governance, policy enforcement, nature of schools, resource/infrastructure availability, prevailing ethos etc
- ✓ Education participation (especially has increased since 1994 Fifteen year Review (2008)
- ✓ Table 2: growth in enrolments for the age cohort between 7-15 years



Highlights

	2002	2007
Five year olds	40%	60%
Six year olds	70%	88%
Seven-15-year olds	96%	98%

**Table 2. Enrolment in school by age
Towards a Fifteen Year Review 2008**



Highlights

- ✓ OECD acknowledgement that SA is close to achieving universal basic education with 96% enrolment for 7-15 year olds
- ✓ High-failure rates, repetition,
- ✓ Poor grade 11 and 12 achievement rates
- ✓ Contradictions in formerly disadvantaged school and former Model C"
 - Implementation of OBE (teacher training, learning material availability, teacher-pupil ratio, parental/community involvement, socio-economic status)
 - Adherence to policy: "no fee policy", information to parents etc
 - Role of SGB affecting governance
 - Matric outputs



2.3. Higher Education

- ✓ Reforms to transform the HE system to serve a new order/ socio-economic needs/global competitiveness
- ✓ Restructuring: two phases in 2004 and 2005
- ✓ In context of 36 public HE institutions (21 universities, 15 technikons)
- ✓ Merged institutions saw the emergence of “universities of technology”, “comprehensive institutions”, national institutes, others remaining “universities”
- ✓ Student funding National Funding Student (NAFSAS)



Highlights

- ✓ Increased enrolment of Africans
- ✓ However historical disparity exists
- ✓ Brier and Mabizela (2008) found that in 2002-2004 enrolment was: 60% for whites, 50% for Indians and for Africans and Coloureds 11% and 12%
- ✓ Declining graduation rates across all major three fields of study (Humanities; Commerce and Science, Engineering and Technology)



Highlights

- ✓ Brier and Mabizela (2008) 20% of first time entrants dropped out in first year, 30% after two/three years dropped out: 50% out of the system before attaining qualifications
- ✓ Mainly due to difficulty of subjects, financial challenges
- ✓ Alarming trend in light of unemployment challenges (Africans/female/humanities/historically black universities)



Highlights

- ✓ Administrative/ organizational challenges
- ✓ Self-definition
- ✓ Disparities between established and historically black institutions/ contradictions within merged institutions
- Quality of “academics”
- contribution to knowledge, innovation
- Social relevance
- Academic/vocational orientation of programmes



Conclusion

- ✓ Reforms in SA's education system since 1994 were important and necessary
- ✓ All sectors of the system were affected: ECD, general schooling, FET, HE etc
- ✓ Great strides made however varying degrees of positive outcomes in some sectors suggest that many challenges remain
- ✓ NB to balance access with quality



Conclusion contd

- ✓ *Schooling system:*
 - Focus on key inputs necessary to generate success of OBE
 - teacher training, learning material, issues of medium of instruction, parental involvement, relationship between matric certificate quality and performance of HE



Conclusion contd.

- ✓ *HE:*
 - Administrative/organizational, academic, funding and identity issues
 - Historical disparity in participation rates
 - Better leadership/management of the “change process”; detailed planning, budgeting and monitoring
- ✓ *First phase* of reforms advanced
- ✓ *Second phase* to be initiated in order to accrue intended outcomes



THANK YOU