



The continued plight of workers in the skills development (transformation) dispensation

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Presentation Outline

- History of Skills development evolution
- Prevailing social and work conditions
- Workplace implementation challenges
- The Key NSDS ignored imperatives
- COSATU Policies on SD and EE
- What needs to be done ?
- Conclusion

History of Skills Development

- 1981 Manpower Training Act that created VOLUNTARY Industry Training Boards
- Many sectors like Metals, Mining, Construction, Furniture, Chemicals, Printing
- Notable lack of Public Service Training coordination led to a Federal model
- Strong Trade Union presence that challenge the white artisan dominance
- Policy changes emanated from the 1991 National Training Strategy Initiative led by the COSATU unions
- 1993 Occupational Health and Safety Act

History of Skills Development

- 1995 Promulgation of the South African Qualifications Authority Act
- 1998 Promulgation of the Employment Equity Act which we argue as labour as critical to advance the problem of lack of industry transformation against the continued discrimination at the workplace
- 1999 Skills Development Act that formed the initial 25 SETAs now 21
- 1999 Skills Development Levies that compels all employers to pay a levy for skills development
- However the Public sector is still currently precluded by law in the payment of the levies

Prevailing social and work conditions

1. The Northern Cape with high levels of structural unemployment that affects close to 72% of the youth between 15 and 34
2. It is estimated that 40% of the new entrants to the labour market are youth. 95% of them don't have tertiary education which is the current entry requirement in most workplaces
3. The poor Basic education throughput leads to many young people failing to proceed to further or higher education every year
4. The youth that proceeds to post school also face a challenge of not possessing the required skills set demanded by the labour market since their institutions don't regularly engage on the labour market needs

Prevailing social and work conditions

5. Many vacant and funded posts in the public service in the face of the high unemployment rate.
6. The fiscal discipline prescribed by the IMF and the World Bank leads to large pools of public sector funds (i.e. UIF with over R100b and the GEPF with over R3 Trillion) not being deployed strategically in decent job creation projects
7. The poor public sector adherence to skills development levy. Many provincial government departments are not paying the funds to their respective SETA's and this is crippling skills development and lowers its confidence

Prevailing social and work conditions

8. The workplace as totally untransformed with apartheid hierarchies
9. The lack of recognition of acquired skills and more emphasis on paper qualifications (RPL not effective)
10. The prevailing hazardous working conditions especially in the mines
11. The lack of focus on Adult education and all lower level training programmes and the sudden shift to graduate internship programmes as quick fixes.

Prevailing social and work conditions

12. Large importations of technical skills that can be built in time with the young people for all these large scale infrastructure projects
13. The lack of long term training programmes for Artisans and Engineers
14. Large amounts of SETA funds (more than R10b) have in the past 15 years wasted on meaningless 3-6 months Learnerships

Workplace implementation challenges

- Many Senior Managers and Executives take Skills Development and Employment Equity as a simple compliance exercise
- Labour Brokers see these exercises as a fishing expedition.
- Sadly the public sector sees this as unnecessary for many professionals who go through academia forget about the large numbers of unskilled workers
- Inadequate skills levels and poor work readiness of young people leaving formal secondary and tertiary education and entering the labour market
- Unemployed who lack basic entry-level skills and experience find it difficult to enter the labour market

Workplace implementation challenges



- Continuing skills shortages in the artisanal, technical and professional fields that are fundamental to the development and growth of our economy
- Over-emphasis on NQF level 1-3 learnerships, with insufficient progression towards skills required for growth sectors in a knowledge economy
- Failure of businesses in many sectors of the economy to equip their workforce to adapt to change as the economy becomes more knowledge-based
- Systemic blockages such as a lack of synergy between the various post-school sub-systems

Workplace implementation challenges



- Absence of coherent strategies within economic and industrial sectors and lack of systematic skills development to support and sustain growth and development
- Urban bias of our economic development leads to urban bias in our skills development initiatives, resulting in skills for rural development being neglected
- Many workplaces do not see the link between work, safety, training, grading, pay and transformation

Key NSDS developmental and transformation imperatives

- **Race** -focus on giving more opportunities to previously (and currently) disadvantaged South Africans
- **Class** -provision of skills in a manner that significantly reduces social inequalities in our economy and society
- **Gender** -specific programmes and strategies to promote gender equality in skills development, in employment and career development and in our economy as a whole

Key NSDS developmental and transformation imperatives

- **Geography** -increase its focus and attention on the production of skills for rural development
- **Age** -must pay particular attention to the training of our youth for employment
- **Disability** -open up opportunities for skills training for people living with disabilities
- **The HIV and AIDS pandemic** -incorporate the fight against this pandemic and management of HIV and AIDS in the workplace

COSATU Policies on SD and EE

- ABET or Lower Levels fundamentalism (and then Progression and Mobility)
- RPL as a Core Assessment tool
- Levy increase (from 1% to 4%) at no cost to workers and the Public sector
- Collective Agreements to Align to Skills Development and Employment Equity

COSATU Policies on SD and EE

- Full Accredited or Modular Based learning programmes
- Major Public provision usage and limited private provision
- Balance between Unemployed and Employed Learners in workplaces
- Skills development that has a provincial footprint through the FET or VCET institutions. These VCET should link with HET institutions
- Shopsteward Based SD and EE Committees (and no Workplace Forums)

What needs to be done?

- Strengthening of the Schooling system is a basic MUST
- Expansion of the Technical Vocational Education stream of the tertiary education
- State Owned Enterprises and the State must centrally drive the process
- Alignment of the curriculum contents of the Basic Education, TVET and HET sectors with the needs of the labour market

What needs to be done?

- Re-skilling of the existing unempolyed youth and even graduates to fill all the Public sector vacancies and also to drive infrastructure projects
- Total removal of the labour brokers who profit through skills development
- Embarking on massive Adult education programmes through the media
- Force government departments to fund, plan and report on skills development
- Alignment of skills development to employment equity

CONCLUSION

COSATU policies can ONLY be achieved through ensuring the following:

1. A clearly increased developmental role of the state
2. Putting an end to privatisation of skills development
3. An increased levy system
4. The controlled institutional fees to curb the erosion of public funds
5. A **Free Education** model for **ALL** as envisaged in the Freedom Charter



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