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## Change Management in TVET Colleges

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# chapter 2

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS** MANAGING THE TRANSFORMATION OF FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING COLLEGES

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## **Introduction**

The South African government, as with most countries globally, has placed significant emphasis on the importance of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) for equipping young people to engage with an increasingly competitive and unpredictable labour market. This emphasis has emerged since 1998, around the same time as interest in TVET worldwide re-emerged, and was established off the back of a brief but intensive period of policy and legislative development which framed the evolution of TVET for the next decade. Core to this thinking was the creation of a sound pre-employment vocational education system that could complement the secondary schooling system and provide vocational pathways. To achieve this, the government sought to revitalise the technical colleges, whose role had disintegrated since the decline of the apprenticeship system towards the end of the last century.

From 2000 onwards, government embarked on a systemic restructuring of the technical colleges. This restructuring took the form of mergers, recapitalisation, recirculation, expansion and, more recently, migration from the authority of provincial departments of education to that of the national Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). The various phases of transformation since then have illustrated the significant challenges associated with trying to reinvent a system to meet the burgeoning demands of a democratic society. For much of the period 1998 to 2006, the college system operated without a strong identity, caught between the battles to remedy the schooling system and the emerging skills development institutions. The performance of the technical colleges (renamed further education and training or FET colleges following the mergers) received little focus during this period, with the emphasis being on restructuring and recapitalisation, rather than addressing fundamental issues about the identity of the colleges, the curriculum they offer, or the role they are expected to play.

Post-2006, there was a greater attempt to distinguish the FET colleges from the rest of the education and training system, and this distinction became more obvious when the colleges became part of an expanded post-school system in 2009, formally splitting from the schooling system. While the post-2009 period has seen significant quantitative growth in the college system, the performance and role of colleges has remained static since then.

Invariably, the transformation of the FET college system since 1998 has been shaped by the shifting ideological and political imperatives of government. While the sector initially followed a trend towards increased autonomy and market-led delivery, it was clear that such an approach would inevitably conflict with the government's agenda of redress, access, and equity. As a result, government, at various points, sought to direct and drive transformation centrally in the absence of a longer-term strategy, and this created mixed messages as to the policy trajectory for colleges. The manifestation of this is a system which has not yet realised full transformation, and still faces uncertainty and confusion as to its role in addressing the skills requirements for sustainable economic growth.

### **The foundations of TVET policy, 1994–1998**

The foundation for a state-driven transformation agenda for vocational education and training was laid early on in the National Training Strategy Initiative (NTSI) (National

Training Board, 1994), which provided for a shift away from the market-led system that had been introduced by the apartheid government in the 1980s and a move towards a more structured, employer-led, competency-based system. The 'privatisation' of artisan training under the auspices of newly created Industry Training Boards resulted in the ultimate erosion of the apprenticeship system, with little uptake under the new system from the employers. As a result, there was a significant reduction in apprenticeship opportunities for youth that had benefited from the state-run system which had guaranteed access to on-the-job training, albeit in an unstructured and poorly monitored environment (Kraak, 2004).

This decline in apprenticeships and on-the-job training had particularly dire consequences for the technical college sector, which had traditionally provided the institutional training for the apprenticeships. The close working relationships between colleges and parastatals dissipated, and colleges became increasingly reliant on fee-paying students who were upgrading their qualifications with the hope of becoming employed, but who were not guaranteed access to workplace learning opportunities (Chisholm, 1992). For black students in township colleges, programmes were limited to low-level technical and commercial subjects, and there was minimal access to artisan training.

Despite the increasing number of black youth participating in technical training from the 1980s onwards, these students were restricted to state colleges which were poorly resourced and highly regulated under the strict control of the former Department of Education and Training (DET). White students continued to benefit from better resourced and more autonomous state-aided colleges.

While the need for institutional reform of technical colleges was a glaring challenge for the new democratic government, the broader configuring of the education and training system following the NTSI laid the basis for the further degradation of the college system. Technical colleges were excluded from the emerging post-apartheid skills development regime of the Department of Labour, continuing to operate within the Ministry of Education. Given the division between education outside of the workplace under the Ministry of Education and occupational training for the workplace under the Department of Labour, it was inevitable that the colleges would increasingly become limited in their ability to directly engage with and respond to industry.

The Education White Paper 4: A Programme for the Transformation of Further Education and Training (RSA, 1998a), which laid the foundation for the Further Education and Training Act No. 98 of 1998 (RSA, 1998b), grappled with how to create a clear identity for colleges within the FET band of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) alongside secondary schools, rather than with the broader role of the colleges in addressing the skills needs of the economy. The White Paper viewed the FET band as an integrated system with a strong interface between secondary schools and colleges, overcoming the traditional distinctions between academic and vocational education, but simultaneously recognising that bringing these two institutional forms together would present a number of legislative and policy challenges.

The FET White Paper also highlighted the need for an institutional context that would allow increased autonomy and flexibility in the delivery of vocational programmes, requiring a new funding framework and a new institutional form. The subsequent FET

Act provided provincial education ministers with the power to create these newly formed institutions through a process of mergers which would bring state and state-aided colleges together and overcome past distinctions and resource inequality. This process of integration would be phased in on the basis of clear institutional plans, and these colleges would need to demonstrate their ability to manage their funds appropriately. The intention was to pilot the new institutional framework by fast tracking a few stronger institutions and testing out the delegated budgetary authority that would be required under the new funding regime.

### **The first stage of implementation: Mergers and restructuring**

Over the decade following 1991, the college sector grew from a base of 39 000 full-time equivalent (FTE) students (Chisholm, 1992) to around 139 000 in 2000 (Powell & Hall, 2002). During this period, there was a significant shift in the student profile – white students made up 67% of the student population in 1991 (Chisholm, 1992), and by 2000 this had shifted to 75% African and only 12% white (Powell & Hall, 2002). The historical distinctions between state and state-aided colleges remained intact, and furthermore, during this period, the racial make-up of staff and the racial profile of governing councils did not change much. White teaching and management staff predominated, particularly in state-aided colleges, and the racial profile of councils continued to be divided on similar lines.

Following the promulgation of the FET Act, it was expected that provincial departments of education would drive the implementation of institutional restructuring to address these imbalance and inequities. However, by 2000, very little progress had been made on the implementation of the FET Act. The Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Western Cape provinces had initiated research into the state of colleges,<sup>3</sup> and the Western Cape Department of Education developed a Master Plan which incorporated an institutional re-organisation plan, but this had not yet been implemented.

In 1999, following the initial studies in Gauteng and the Western Cape and based on the findings thereof, the National Business Initiative (NBI) initiated a five-year private sector funded programme, the Colleges Collaboration Fund (CCF), to support the restructuring and development of the colleges. The CCF model drew heavily on the market-driven systems of the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia, seeking to incentivise change in the college system through financial and technical assistance. Drawing on the policy and legislative frameworks, the programme sought to support provincial departments of education to fast track the implementation of the FET Act based on the stipulations in the FET White Paper, and further develop the governance and management capacity of the colleges to ensure that the restructuring process would have an effective and sustainable outcome.

The NBI extended the situational analyses that had been done in Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal to all nine provinces to provide the basis for the restructuring plan in each province. In addition, through a government-to-government agreement

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3 Fisher, Hall and Jaff (1998); Kraak and Hall (1999) and National Business Initiative (1999) respectively.

between South Africa and the UK, the NBI initiated the Tirisano Fellowship, an international exchange programme aimed at placing (particularly black) middle managers for a three-month period in a UK college to develop their skills in a specialised area of college management under the mentorship of a UK college mentor. The fellowship's key objective was to address equity issues in middle management by targeting black and female middle managers.

The situational analyses of the nine provinces provided insight into the severe weaknesses in the capacity of both the provincial departments of education and the colleges themselves. On the basis of these findings, and given the delays in meaningful progress in implementing the FET Act, the national Department of Education (DoE) in 2001 embarked on a nationally driven process of planning. Provincial departments were tasked with developing provincial restructuring plans, with the key focus on merging institutions based on size and proximity. The merger of institutions was expected to bring about increased efficiencies, responsiveness, and equity across colleges. A rapid process of merger facilitation was undertaken at each of the identified clusters of colleges. Merger plans were completed within a period of three months in each of the newly merged colleges, and new councils were established in 2002.

The relationships between provincial departments of education and the colleges under their control varied from province to province, but in general there was limited capacity or support available to colleges in many provinces. While there were dedicated FET directorates in each province, in most cases these were poorly resourced, and the officials therein were thinly stretched in trying to provide colleges with meaningful support. With the exception of the Western Cape, the provincial departments of education did not assign priority to the colleges. As a result, the DoE created the national framework for the merger process, which the provinces and colleges were expected to implement. This rapid change process proved difficult for both provincial officials and college officials, given the limited capacity and support available on the ground.

For colleges, the merger process involved bringing together institutions with vastly different organisational cultures, identities, and resource bases. In a case study of the merger of three colleges in Tshwane, Sooklal (2004) illustrates the extent to which the colleges were forced into the merger process without effective support. The flow of communication to staff around the merger was weak, and there were high levels of resistance, particularly from staff from the previously 'white' college. The tensions associated with race and cultural beliefs were not effectively addressed, and this hindered the integration of the three institutions. There was a lack of clarity around leadership and lines of accountability during the initial period of the merger, restricting decision-making and further adding to the instability in the colleges. Ultimately, the manner in which the merger was managed represented a missed opportunity for meaningful transformation, and the potential benefits of the merger in this regard were not realised.

This case study represents the common challenges that were being experienced in colleges across the country at the time. The absence of leadership at the institutional level during the merger period was a cause for anxiety and tension throughout the system. Principals of pre-merged colleges were not meaningfully brought into the process, and staff were unsure of to whom they should be accountable. The support provided to the colleges in the form of merger facilitators assisted in moving the merger processes

forward rapidly, but led to variable outputs, and did not provide an optimal environment for stakeholder engagement. In some cases, it was the facilitators themselves, despite having little understanding of the college sector, who wrote the merger plans, with little input from stakeholders in the colleges.

While the new colleges were declared and councils were appointed soon after the merger plans were completed, the process of appointment of new principals was prolonged, and was only completed in all provinces by mid-2003 (Gewe, 2005). The colleges therefore operated in a situation of relative uncertainty during this time, as staff awaited the new leadership, and were uncertain about the impact of the restructuring process on positions in the colleges.

One of the key outcomes of the merger process was to consolidate enrolments in the college system, so as to enhance scale and efficiencies. Prior to the mergers, 70% of colleges enrolled fewer than 1 000 FTEs, and following the mergers, 78% of the newly merged colleges enrolled more than 1 000 FTEs (DoE, 2004c). In addition, the merger process did succeed in its intent to combine smaller and weaker colleges with stronger colleges so as to create a more equitable institutional base. An indication of this outcome is that in 1998, prior to the mergers, 26% of senior staff in colleges were black, and 74% were white. By 2002, 41% were black, and 59% were white. However, due to the manner in which the merger process was managed, the strengthening and repositioning of the colleges to respond to social and economic demands was not necessarily realised (DoE, 2004c).

## **The second phase of transformation: Institutional differentiation**

Despite the intentions underlying the restructuring of the FET landscape, the 50 newly merged FET colleges still faced a number of historical obstacles to meaningful reform. Many of the issues facing colleges prior to the mergers remained. The limited scope of programmes offered, the bias towards theory, and the generally weak relationships between colleges and industry continued to plague colleges. The large investment by the private sector in the CCF had supported the broad restructuring of the sector, but had done little to bring about improvement in management, or in the quality of teaching and learning in the colleges.

The DoE had elected to focus the efforts of the CCF on the national restructuring plan. The CCF investment in management development was largely assigned to the Tirisano Fellowship programme, which was geared to developing a future corps of middle management that could drive transformation post-restructuring. The fellows were exposed to a range of best practices in UK colleges, with the expectation that they would be able to bring these practices back to the restructured colleges. Due to the high levels of instability in the college sector during and immediately following the mergers, the contribution of the fellows was largely restricted, and many were treated with a certain level of disdain. Nonetheless, the role of the Tirisano fellows became increasingly valuable during the merger planning (Gewe, 2005). In the aftermath of the mergers, opportunities were created for fellows to move into leadership roles in the colleges, or be integrally involved in the development and implementation of new policies, particularly in the areas of student support and quality assurance. The scope of the fellows' contribution

was determined by the emerging leadership in the colleges, and despite fellows' initial frustrations over the lack of support on their return, the programme eventually changed the racial profile of management, and contributed to more effective policy development.

However, the extent to which new innovative practice could be brought into the colleges was still inhibited by their weak identity and limited scope of provision. While the FET Act had enabled the merger and renaming of colleges, their status within the FET band still remained on the periphery of the secondary schooling system. The college curriculum remained intact, and there was no framework for curriculum diversification or funding of new programmes. While there was an initial increase in 'non-DoE' programmes during the period 1998 to 2000, suggesting some shift away from the traditional programmes, this increase slowed in the period 2000–2002 (the merger period), and enrolment in these programmes represented only 14% of the total full-time enrolment in 2002 (DoE, 2004c).

Similarly, despite the intent in White Paper 4 to link colleges to the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), there had been little engagement by 2002. There was little involvement of colleges in learnership provision (DoE, 2004a), with the exception of those campuses that already had track records and resources in certain occupational fields, and were approached by companies or SETAs to participate in learnership initiatives. In addition, the large-scale roll-out of strategic National Skills Fund (NSF) projects through SETAs as part of the Department of Labour's National Skills Development Strategy represented an important opportunity for colleges to develop responsive occupational programmes linked to key sectors (e.g. FIETA Shintsha Project, FoodBev Learnership Project, BANKSETA Learnership Project). However, it was clear that such learnership programmes would invariably only benefit a relatively small number of students, given the funding and systemic challenges faced.

In line with the DoE's strategy to support the 50 merged colleges and to raise their profiles, the period 2005–2008 represented a significant phase of policy implementation. The DoE sought to actively increase the levels of autonomy in the 50 merged colleges so as to create the space for them to realise a more distinct role alongside secondary schools. This involved four key activities: a recapitalisation programme, redefining the identity of the colleges, developing a new curriculum, and establishing a new funding regime.

### ***Recapitalisation***

The DoE requested a recapitalisation grant from the National Treasury to fund the upgrading and development of infrastructure and capacity in the colleges to implement programmes which would address the 11 priority skills areas (DoE Budget Vote, 2004/05).

The recapitalisation programme flowed from the Financial and Institutional Review conducted by the consulting firm KPMG through funding from the CCF (DoE, 2004b). As part of this exercise, KPMG analysed the level of investment needed to achieve equity across the newly merged colleges with respect to infrastructure. Based largely on an analysis of the merger plans, KPMG calculated that an injection of R1.8 billion was needed to 'level the playing field' and 'sustain operations at the Colleges' (DoE, 2004b). In its report, KPMG highlighted the importance of treating the register of needs generated as part of the merger process with some caution, given that the register was

viewed as a wish list in some cases, rather than a practical analysis of the college's needs. However, the analysis provided an estimate of the aggregate investment needed to develop the merged colleges. In 2003, KPMG also developed a financial management toolkit, and 10 colleges were identified as high risk and provided with short-term, intensive financial management support.

Between 2004 and 2005, the National Treasury approved a R1.9 billion recapitalisation grant for all 50 colleges, most of which was earmarked for development or upgrading of infrastructure, purchasing of equipment, and training of staff. The total allocation was divided over four years, a preparatory year followed by three years of actual implementation. In 2005/06, R50 million was allocated to the DoE for planning and preparation of the college sector procurement and finance systems. The DoE commissioned a range of research to establish the baseline and set targets for the recapitalisation programmes. Colleges were required to develop recapitalisation plans in seven strategic management areas, namely human resource development (HRD), systems and procedures, refurbishment of infrastructure, building or purchasing new infrastructure, refurbishing of campus sites, equipment, and curriculum support.

While plans initially had a strong focus on the delivery of learnerships and skills programmes, this focus was revised and placed on introduction of the new National Certificate Vocational (NCV) programmes. The DoE was clearly preparing colleges for the introduction of the curriculum, with a view that the NCV would form the basis for future growth and development in college programme delivery. A portion of the grant was earmarked for the upgrading of 2 000 lecturers to deliver the NCV programmes, and this was complemented by training for a further 6 000 lecturers by the DoE over the three-year period. Generally, the recapitalisation programme was well managed across the provinces, and the colleges met their expenditure against plan, with close monitoring from the DoE and the provincial departments of education. However, the primary focus on the NCV further suggested that engagement of the colleges in learnerships and occupationally driven training was unlikely to materialise.

### ***Redefining colleges***

The second key measure to support the evolution of the 50 merged colleges was to create more clarity in law as to the distinct identity of the colleges vis-à-vis the secondary schooling system which operated alongside them in the further education and training band. Under the Further Education and Training Colleges Act No. 16 of 2006, (RSA, 2006), colleges would be renamed as 'FET Colleges' rather than 'FET Institutions'. This meant that while FET colleges would still operate primarily in the further education and training band of the education system, they could be assigned more autonomy and be given distinct powers.

In order to further reinforce this new identity, and to enable colleges to respond more effectively to the demand for skills, the FET Act of 2006 provided for college educators and administrative staff to come under the employ of the colleges, rather than the state. This would allow colleges to organise their staff in a manner that would allow for more responsive delivery and was based on the assumption that the colleges required such autonomy in order to effectively deliver on the emerging NCV curriculum in the context of market competition and the demand for quality vocational education. In essence,

the Act sought to position colleges as institutions of choice.

The promulgation of this Act implied a blanket move towards institutional autonomy, which was an important shift from the rhetoric in the FET White Paper which had suggested a more developmental approach towards autonomy, based on the capacity and resources of the colleges. While the recapitalisation programme had ostensibly contributed to levelling the playing field in terms of infrastructure, the management and governance capacity in colleges was still highly variable, and while colleges had benefited from the Tirisano Fellowship and other donor-funded management development initiatives, the post-merger college structures still lacked sufficient management experience, particularly in the management of large multi-campus institutions. The FET Colleges Act would require colleges to take on responsibility for the employment of large numbers of teaching and administrative staff, in addition to implementing a vastly different curriculum and a new funding regime. In terms of the Act, all public FET colleges were deemed to be autonomous, regardless of their management and governance capacity.

The effect of the Act was to create high levels of anxiety amongst college staff, as they faced the decision of whether to move into the employ of the colleges, which would threaten the security of their employment, or remain employed by the provincial departments of education (the latter would mean that they could be redeployed away from the college to another position within the provincial education departments). As a result of this instability, there was an exodus from the colleges of some staff who chose to either remain with the provinces or move out of the education system.

While the scope of this exodus is not clear, there was general concern over the capacity of the governing councils to act as employers and there was confusion over the role of the provincial departments of education who still held the purse strings (continuing to administer the payroll of the conditional grant allocation) and could determine the appointment of staff. In addition, the principals of the colleges continued to be accountable to the provincial education departments rather than to the councils, which limited the role of the councils in driving performance improvement. The situation also created internal tensions between staff who were still on the state payroll and still enjoying state benefits, and those staff who were employed on college contracts, and therefore did not enjoy the same job security and benefits.

This instability was acknowledged in 2011<sup>4</sup> after the newly formed Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) had started the process to take control of the FET colleges, and the DHET sought to regularise the employment of all college staff to bring college employees onto an even footing and further transfer them back to the employ of the state. In the intervening years since promulgation of the FET Colleges Act of 2006, the employment conditions of staff in colleges had been a source of constant tension.

While the intention of the Act was to increase the autonomy of the colleges, the implementation of the Act further exposed the weak capacity of colleges to govern themselves. There was limited capacity in the provincial departments of education to support the colleges in this transition, and the decision by the DoE to force colleges to

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4 Address by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, during parliamentary debate on the Further Education and Training Colleges, Cape Town (20/09/2011).

adopt a new identity while still seeking to create stability and cohesion in the aftermath of the mergers only created further mistrust and disillusionment amongst staff. This state of affairs raised the question of the readiness of colleges to operate autonomously and engage in market competition, given the range of unresolved internal issues and the relative immaturity of the system post-merger. In particular, the readiness of governing councils to take on the responsibility of employing large numbers of staff, given the variability in their levels of expertise and experience, was in question.

In effect, a rigorous analysis of the state of readiness of the colleges should have been done as stipulated in the FET White Paper, and a stronger focus on development should have been undertaken to avoid the instability and negative impact on management and staff. The college context that was inherited by the DHET after 2009 highlighted these problems. The approach of providing gradual autonomy to those colleges that had the capacity to govern themselves could perhaps have provided the basis for developing an appropriate model and formula for self-governance.

### ***Curriculum transformation***

The third key element of driving the colleges forward post-merger was the introduction of a new curriculum that would be relevant to the needs of the economy. The intention behind the NCV was to more strategically position colleges to address priority skills demands by delivering sound general-vocational programmes that would prepare young people for entry into the workplace. The NCV should also provide a viable alternative pathway for young people who had completed Grade 9 and wished to follow a vocational pathway. The NCV should assist colleges to overcome the legacy of the N-programmes which had limited the scope of college provision and inhibited the employability of college students. The NCV would provide the equivalent of a vocational matric at Level 4 of the NQF.

The recapitalisation had been explicitly geared to preparing colleges to introduce the NCV, from both an infrastructural and capacity perspective. However, the delivery of the NCV presented a number of institutional challenges. The new curriculum required a shift away from trimester and semester programmes to a three-year qualification, which significantly altered timetabling and required the colleges to deliver the curriculum to fewer students for longer periods of time. In addition, while the N-programmes were being phased out, colleges were required to run the NCV and N-programmes simultaneously. In many cases, colleges would use the same lecturers to deliver both programmes, resulting in lecturers having little time for preparation and marking. Colleges also had to bring in a stronger focus on the foundational skills (English, Mathematics and Life Skills), as well as integrate theory and practice in the vocational subjects (through workshop practice). These requirements were particular challenges for colleges that did not have the teaching personnel to cope with the demands of the language and Mathematics curricula and had not provided practical workshop training in the past.

In a study of Engineering, Construction, and IT lecturers in 2009, the NBI found that two thirds of these lecturers had no teaching qualifications, a third had no technical qualifications, and only 41% had technical qualifications above Level 5 on the NQF (NBI, 2010). Similarly, the HSRC found that 57% of college lecturing staff nationally have less than a degree/higher diploma (Cosser, Kraak & Winnar, 2011). A national

study of lecturers across a range of fields in 2011 found that half the lecturers had no industry experience, and the majority had been in the college for fewer than five years (NBI, 2011). The increased demands of the curriculum placed significant pressure on these lecturers, and there had been limited time to address the capacity gaps. Despite the high level of investment in training of lecturers prior to the introduction of the NCV through the recapitalisation programme, these studies pointed to a substantial deficiency in the teaching capacity of college lecturers, and a more comprehensive programme to upgrade their skills and qualifications was required.

The second challenge related to the target group. The NCV assumed that the schooling system would have equipped young Grade 9s to exit the system and cope with the cognitive demands of the curriculum. With the first group of enrolments in 2007, colleges were not discerning in their selection, and of the 26 541 students enrolled at Level 2 nationally, only 4 490 were still enrolled at Level 4 in 2009, and 1 194 met the requirements for certification at the end of 2009. Increasingly, colleges became more selective about their entry criteria, and by 2009, 53% of college students were found to have achieved a Grade 12 matriculation certificate (Gewer, 2010). Colleges indicated that these matriculants coped better with the demands of the NCV, and by 2011, the NCV examinations results were demonstrating signs of improvement. However, the drive to rapidly massify the enrolments in NCV courses inhibited the capacity of colleges to bring about improvements in performance. The National Plan for Further Education and Training Colleges in 2008 (DoE, 2008) set the target of 800 000 enrolments in the NCV by 2014 off the base of 25 000. This translated into between 43% and 46% growth per annum.

The poor performance of students in the NCV programmes represented a threat to achieving this growth, creating an obstacle to colleges taking on new enrolments and also a negative perception of the NCV. After the weak results of the first cohort of NCV students in 2007, the DoE introduced a concession for colleges to allow NCV students progression to the next level of the qualification having passed only four of the seven required subjects. This exacerbated the blockages, as students who were carrying subjects that they could not pass had to extend their time to qualification, or drop out.

In effect, the NCV did not realise this massive growth in student enrolments. While the DoE had provided bursaries for NCV students from 2007 through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), the number of students who could benefit from this scheme was limited, and the fees required from students were substantially higher than those required for the trimester and semester programmes. In addition, the high cost of the programme, combined with the poor throughput rates, restricted the number of new students that colleges could enrol. By 2009, when the National Plan took effect, there were 122 921 NCV enrolments in colleges, which was in line with the National Plan. However, it was clear that the targets could not be reached through the NCV alone.

### **The third stage of transformation: Moving to a consolidated post-school system**

Despite extensive efforts to redefine and distinguish the FET college system, there were clear signs in 2009 that colleges were struggling to implement the range of policies that

emerged during the second period of transformation and had begun to stagnate and even regress. There were high levels of dysfunctionality in some provinces (notably Limpopo, the Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal), the throughput rates were not improving significantly, and there were persistent levels of tension within the colleges regarding employment conditions.

The splitting of the Department of Education and the resultant creation of a Department of Higher Education and Training laid the foundation for wresting the colleges away from the provinces and bringing them into a national framework. Many of the persistent challenges were perceived to be symptomatic of poor management and support on the part of most provinces. The colleges also became part of the newly elected government's Plan of Action, through which a Delivery Agreement was signed between the President and the new Minister of Higher Education and Training. This delivery agreement outlined targets for increased enrolments and improved throughput in the FET colleges over a five-year period. Importantly, while the Delivery Agreement set targets for increased access to post-Grade 12 programmes (i.e. N4–N6), it did not provide targets for increased enrolments in NCV programmes. Rather, the Delivery Agreement focused on increased throughput of students in the NCV<sup>5</sup> programmes.

In order to give effect to the migration process, a protocol was signed between the Minister and Director-General of the DHET and their provincial counterparts, whereby they agreed to work collaboratively and take no decisions without consultation. This agreement would overcome conflicts of inter-government relations regarding FET colleges until the formal transfer took place, and enable the DHET to drive college transformation at a national level in line with the Minister's Delivery Agreement.

A key priority was the targets for increased enrolments. Given the low prospects for massive growth, the low throughput, and the general uncertainty and discomfort amongst industry with respect to the NCV, the newly formed DHET extended the phasing out of the N-programmes in 2010.<sup>6</sup> Those colleges that had begun to phase out the programmes were now required to reinstate them. In addition, the funding that had been allocated through a conditional grant to fund NCV students would now have to be split between students in NCV and N-programmes, further limiting growth in NCV enrolment numbers.

Thus began the DHET's programme to massively speed up the rate of growth in FET colleges. Between 2010 and 2013, the college student population grew from 420 000 to around 709 000 (DHET report to Parliament, February 2015). This growth was accompanied by an increase in the budget allocation from R3.3 billion in 2009 to R5.8 billion in 2014. Simultaneously, the bursary allocation for FET college students grew from R300 million in 2009 to R2.1 billion in 2014. Despite this increase in budget, the relative size of the FET college budget to the total education budget remained static

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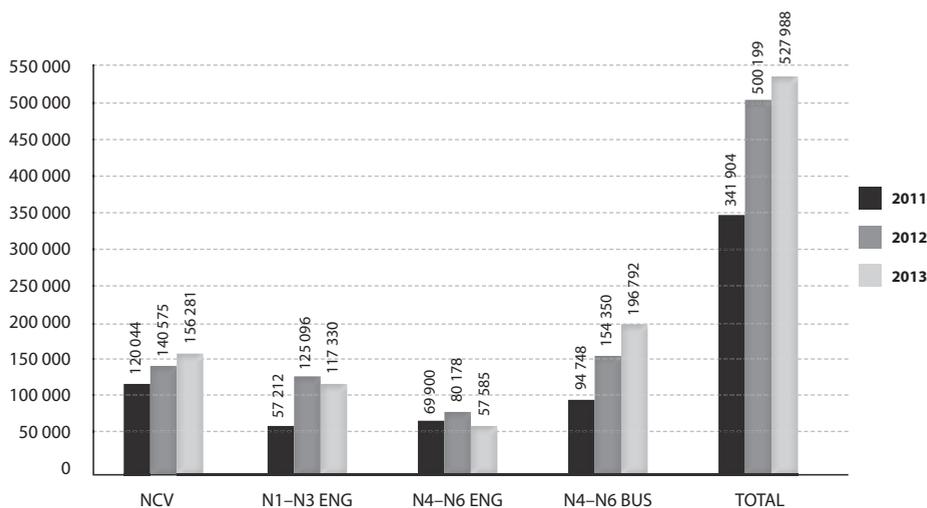
5 Department of Higher Education and Training, Delivery Agreement 5: A Skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path.

6 Originally the Department of Education intended to phase out N1–N3 programmes by the end of 2006 and N4–N6 programmes by December 2011. The Minister of Higher Education and Training then extended the phasing out of the N4–N6 programmes to December 2013 and the N1–N3 programmes until the Quality Council for Trade and Occupations (QCTO) had developed appropriate occupational qualifications.

(around 2.5%), and colleges were continuing to enrol more students without sufficient subsidies to cover the numbers being enrolled. A task team report<sup>7</sup> on Funding and Planning in FET Colleges ahead of the FET Summit in 2010 found that many colleges were enrolling in excess of their approved budget allocation, causing them to operate at a loss. It was estimated that bad debt in colleges was around R83.6 million in 2008/09, particularly due to non-payment from NCV students. The expectations of free tuition had emerged as a result of the introduction of the national bursary scheme, and it was proving difficult to dampen these expectations. As a result, many students were not paying for their courses, or dropping out because they did not have sufficient finance.

Despite this, colleges continued to grow, and in his 2014 budget speech to Parliament, the Minister of Higher Education expressed confidence that the target of 800 000 would be reached in 2014. The large portion of this growth has been achieved in the N-programmes. The N1–N3 Engineering programmes, which had traditionally served the apprenticeship systems, grew off a base of 8 000 in 2010 to 117 000 in 2013 (DHET enrolment data). While N1–N3 Engineering had been reintroduced to provide a supply of candidates into artisan training, these students would be unlikely to find workplaces where they could undertake apprenticeships.

**FIGURE 4** FET College enrolments by programme 2011–2013 (calculated using DHET enrolment data)



The N4–N6 programmes (for post-Grade 12s) experienced growth off a base of 71 000 in 2010 to 254 000 in 2013. A large part of this growth was in the Business Studies programmes, which offered limited prospects for employment.

By 2013, therefore, the headcount in N-programmes had jumped to 371 707 nationally, and colleges were placed under severe pressure to cope with these additional enrolments. Students flooded into the N-programmes because they were shorter in duration, cheaper,

7 Report to the FET Summit – Task Team 3: Planning and Funding for 2011 and Beyond. 23 August 2010.

and perceived to be easier than the NCV. However, the reintroduction of the N-programmes contributed to further instability in colleges. The increase in student numbers required the colleges to re-orientate their resource allocations, which had been set up to accommodate the full-scale implementation of the NCV. While the directive from the DHET was to manage the expansion according to available resources and capacity, many colleges enrolled beyond what their budgets and resources would allow, extending N-programmes into the afternoons and evenings, and engaging lecturing staff on a contract basis, or paying existing staff overtime to deliver these programmes. The dual delivery of NCV subjects and N-programmes during the day placed additional pressure on lecturers, impacting on preparation and marking time.

Some college staff welcomed the reintroduction of the N-programmes – they were better known and understood by both industry and the general public, and they were cheaper and less resource-intensive to run. However, despite the N-programmes being less onerous than the NCV for both the colleges and the students (they only required four subjects and no practical instruction), students' results in the N-programmes were similarly weak, with between 35 and 40% of students successfully completing (DHET Examinations data). Although the reintroduction of the N-programmes allowed for more rapid growth at a fraction of the cost of the NCV, it also resulted in confusion and the undoing of the extensive efforts on the part of colleges to promote and develop the NCV. There was an emerging sense that the NCV was a valuable programme that should prepare students well for entry into the workplace. However, the pressure on the DHET to grow the colleges and the relative cost of the NCV have had a negative effect on realising the NCV's potential and have rather allowed the colleges to regress into the comfort of the narrow N-programmes which offer limited scope for employability. This was illustrated in two tracer studies of Engineering graduates from N1–N3 programmes in 2001 and 2003 (Gewe, 2009). In these studies, Gewe found that only 25% of graduates were in employment, only 50% of whom were in a job related to their qualification. A key factor in ensuring employability was having access to work experience/workplace learning during studies. Across these two cohorts, 83% of these graduates received no work experience while studying, and 53% of those who did find work experience did so on their own, rather than through assistance from the colleges. No data exists on the employability of NCV graduates, although informal discussions with employers in the manufacturing and construction sector suggest that NCV graduates are of a higher calibre than those that have graduated with N-programmes.

The effect of the massive growth in student numbers has also been felt in the performance of students. In 2009, the NCV was producing an average pass rate of 9.55% at Level 2. By 2012, the average certification rate at Level 2 had increased to 42.6% (DHET Examinations data), indicating substantial improvement in performance during this period. However, while there had been a steady increase in performance between 2009 and 2011, there was a drop in Level 2 performance between 2011 and 2012, from 44.8% to 42.6%. In addition, the retention rates for NCV Level 2 students dropped from 61% to 48%. Similarly, the 2012 examination results for N4–N6 indicate an average 23% success rate, compared to 36% in 2011. This general decline in performance occurred in the context of a 64% increase in headcount enrolments from 400 273 in 2011 (DHET, 2013) to 657 690 in 2012 (DHET, 2014). With the anticipated increase to over 800 000 students

in 2016 (double the 2011 enrolment), there is likely to be a further decline in student performance.

Ultimately, the migration of colleges from the provinces to the DHET has enabled significant growth in the sector after a decade of relative stagnation. The elevation of the sector to the post-school arena has created the impetus for growth, as government seeks to actively tackle the rising concern of youth unemployment and disengaged youth. However, the migration has also unveiled persistent challenges that continue to threaten stability in colleges and undermine their ability to fully realise their role in a national post-school system.

In the first instance, the DHET had to address the governance issues across the sector. With the migration to the DHET, the authority for appointment of governing councils shifted to the Minister of Higher Education and Training, in terms of the FET Colleges Amendment Act No. 3 of 2012. The DHET inherited councils that had variable functionality and legitimacy. At the time of this transfer of authority, finally in April 2013, the terms of the councils of 28 colleges across four provinces, including three which had the highest risk colleges (Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape), had already expired. Other councils' terms lapsed before the Minister was able to reappoint new members. As a result, councils in these colleges were operating without legitimate authority, and there were concerns that many of their decisions could be found to be invalid if challenged. This placed the principal in a highly precarious and vulnerable position as the accounting officer, as it invariably indicated shortfalls in financial accountability and other forms of governance. The situation resulted in a protracted governance vacuum, and there were no guidelines to colleges on how to respond. Principals continued to operate without effective controls. Where councils had dedicated and committed members, the functions of the councils were able to continue largely unhindered, allowing a certain level of stability. In many cases, however, the active involvement of governing councils subsided or ceased until the Minister was finally able to appoint new councils in 2014, and the governance of the colleges was highly unstable.

The second challenge that the DHET has had to grapple with is the funding regime for colleges. Funding challenges exist at various levels of the system. In the first instance, the available budget allocation for colleges remains a key obstacle to growth. Despite the substantial growth in student numbers over the past five years, the budget for colleges still remains at around 2.4% of total education spend in the country, having been at this level since 2006. This has placed significant pressure on the system at all levels, given that the budget barely catered for the number of students who were enrolled in 2010. The DHET has increasingly sought additional complementary funding from the National Skills Fund and the SETAs, but funding still represents an ever-present obstacle.

Secondly, the flow of funding from National Treasury to colleges has been a persistent source of frustration since the DHET came into being. Despite the gradual migration of colleges to the DHET, the funding for colleges has continued to flow through the provincial administrations, negatively impacting the effective disbursement of funds to the FET colleges and their cash flow status. Colleges in some provinces continue to receive less funding than anticipated and do not receiving the funding according to the stipulated timeframes. As of 2014, the DHET has introduced amendments to the funding norms, which will remove the Provincial Education Departments from the planning and

administration of funding for FET colleges. However, while the DHET took formal responsibility for colleges as of 1 April 2013, the transfer of the funding mechanism has still not taken effect, and provinces continue to be the conduit for the flow of funding.

At an institutional level, colleges display variable effectiveness in their financial management systems. The weak financial management capacity in many colleges was acknowledged by the Minister of Higher Education and Training in 2012, and a programme to install temporary chief financial officers (CFOs) through the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants was put in place in that year. The mandate of these acting CFOs was to stabilise and enhance the financial management systems in colleges, as well as to transfer skills to ensure these systems can be maintained.

In the Eastern Cape, an assessment of the financial management systems at the end of 2011 by JET found the systems to be primitive, with outdated recordkeeping, weak financial policies, and limited financial management skills. College budgets were controlled at central office, and campuses had little influence on the allocation of budgets or the procurement of materials. As such, colleges were unable to effectively track programme expenditure. At a macro level, this has made it impossible to accurately measure whether or not the funding received by colleges actually covers the real cost of programme delivery.<sup>8</sup> It also implies that the annual operational plans prepared by colleges are unlikely to accurately reflect actual budget requirements and will invariably result in a funding gap. The appointment of the acting CFOs has hopefully brought some stability to the financial management systems, but it is likely that many colleges will not have resolved the persistent shortcomings in financial management.

The third critical challenge that the DHET has faced is resolving the employment conditions in colleges. As indicated above, the 2006 Act had created a high level of anxiety and instability amongst staff, and the implementation of the Act had contributed to complexities in the conditions of employment of teaching staff in particular. In the first instance, there were persistent discrepancies between teaching staff previously employed by the state and now employed on a permanent basis by the college councils, and those teaching staff employed on contract by the colleges. The former enjoyed state benefits and job security, while the latter were subject to contract renewals and did not enjoy many benefits, placing them in a highly insecure and vulnerable position. This was a recipe for persistent internal tensions.

The Act had also disadvantaged those lecturers who moved from state to council employ. As a result of their shift to council employ, teaching staff who were former state employees did not enjoy the occupation-specific dispensation afforded to teachers in schools.<sup>9</sup>

The DHET has sought to reverse the effects of the Act, while simultaneously addressing inequities in the employment conditions of staff. In August 2010, an agreement was

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8 Colleges are funded according to a funding formula which translates into unit cost per student, depending on the number of teaching posts.

9 The OSD was a customised remuneration dispensation for educators which extended the salary bands and thereby provided salary progression for employees who chose to remain in the classroom rather than move into managerial posts. This would assist the Department of Education with the recruitment and retention of educators.

signed in the FET College Bargaining Unit of the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), recognising college teaching staff who were previously employed by the state as being equal to public school teaching staff and therefore eligible for the occupation-specific dispensation. A further agreement of the ELRC in 2013 (Collective Agreement 2 of 2013) provided for the permanent appointment of temporary and contract staff who had been working at a college for more than 12 months, providing that substantive posts were available. This was immediately followed by Collective Agreement 3 of 2013 which made provision for parity in conditions of service for college lecturers who were still being paid through the state payroll (i.e. formerly employed by the state) and those on college payrolls (i.e. contract teaching staff). This allowed the latter to receive the same benefits as the former. National Treasury had made available R400 million to improve the conditions of service of these contract staff in order to bring them on a par with full-time staff.

Finally, in November 2013, a collective agreement was signed that made way for the transfer of FET college lecturers from the employ of the colleges to the employ of the DHET (i.e. in terms of the Public Service Act), thus giving effect to the FET Colleges Amendment Act of 2012.

Through these various agreements, the DHET has gone some way towards laying the foundation for reversing the effects of the 2006 Act and stabilising the employment conditions in colleges, which seems to have been positively received by college staff. This process will still require a rigorous process of correlating and verifying funded posts against appointments and the payroll, so that the process of migrating staff can be effectively managed.

The shift of the teaching force to the DHET provides the basis for developing an appropriate national plan for human resource development in colleges. Following a five-year protracted process, the DHET has developed a Policy on Professional Qualifications for Lecturers in TVET (RSA, 2013) which details the minimum professional qualification requirements for college lecturers. The FET Summit report from 2010 highlighted the need for a national audit of FET college lecturers. A study by the NBI in 2011 highlighted the complex array of qualifications within the college teaching corps, making it difficult to classify which lecturers would meet the necessary minimum requirements and even more difficult to develop an appropriate intervention plan.

It is clear, however, from the various studies undertaken by the NBI that there is a large number of colleges that lack either the pedagogical or technical knowledge to teach their particular fields of study. There is also generally a poor understanding of the role of the vocational educator and the particular value of the vocational qualification. Furthermore, the various university Schools of Education are ill-equipped to deliver the new vocational educator qualifications and have little track record in training college lecturers. These universities have been wary of taking on the new qualifications, given that the size of the college teaching force is small relative to the public schooling system. The DHET has begun a process to engage universities in the teaching of the new qualifications, but there will be a critical challenge in linking the delivery of these qualifications to a longer-term human resource development strategy for colleges.

## **Conclusions**

The transformation of the FET college sector over the past 20 years has highlighted important lessons for the management of change in a complex and constantly evolving political context. The complexity has its origins in the original formulation of the sector within the constitution as a concurrent national and provincial function (along with public schooling) and separating the sector from the regime which governs training for the workplace. This formulation created a fragmented college system, with few resources and weak support at a provincial level. Until 2009, the college sector limped along, showing little growth and struggling to adapt to the changing policy requirements.

The past few years have seen massive growth, but the DHET has had to expend extensive effort to wrest the colleges away from provinces and reverse some of the key policies that have hampered growth and stability. In doing so, the DHET has consolidated the colleges into a more coherent system and laid the foundation for growth and development.

There are however, a number of critical challenges ahead, some of which have been raised in this chapter. The DHET still needs to make strategic decisions as to which programmes should be grown, rather than further contributing to developing skills for saturated sectors with few employment prospects. The DHET also needs to develop an appropriate plan for college lecturers to ensure that the necessary skills base is in place to deliver on these programmes and ensure students are ready for the workplace. Finally, the DHET needs to ensure that the colleges have the necessary systems in place to responsibly and effectively manage public resources.

More broadly, however, while the DHET has begun to articulate a stronger vision for the college sector, renaming them Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, the institutions will not be able to live up to this title without being able to occupy a more innovative and responsive space in the education and training market. The extent to which the employability of students is enhanced is dependent on the ability of colleges to produce the right kinds of skills, and on employers being willing to take on students for further training in the workplace.

In taking on these challenges in the next phase of transformation, the critical factor that will ensure success is the creation of a culture of engagement and empowerment within the colleges, so as to create buy-in to government strategy and policy while carefully planning and managing the issues that emerge. In this way, a measure of stability can be maintained while the longer-term challenges are being addressed.

## **An integrated framework for effective college transformation**

Through its work on the Colleges Improvement Project (CIP) in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo, JET developed a comprehensive framework for college improvement (JET, 2012). The fundamental tenet that informed this framework is the need for a transformation approach which not only addresses technical functionality, but also addresses changes in institutional culture, particularly around accountability, responsibility, and professionalism. The framework addressed this at both a strategic and operational level

and is ultimately geared to improving the core business of the colleges, which is the student experience.

There are three main pillars of FET college performance.

The first is a high level of administrative efficiency (pillar 3); the second is effective and well-managed efforts to enhance learner performance (pillar 2); and the third is well-planned and well-managed partnerships, and linkages that are productive and are directed at specific learner outcomes (pillar 1). If these areas are effectively managed, the functionality of FET colleges can be improved markedly. The framework is captured in Figure 5.

The most critical pillar – strengthening the various ‘functions’ in the colleges – is located at the centre of the model. These functions include the core functions of teaching and learning to enhance learner performance and success and all the administrative and corporate service functions which support the process of teaching and learning. If these functions are strengthened, the probability of enhanced college performance is increased significantly.

However, the direct improvement of college functions may not necessarily result in enhanced college functionality. Achieving real and sustainable transformation will depend on change in a number of areas. Based on the CIP’s initial assessment of the state of the colleges, the framework identifies six conditions or areas of impact which must be addressed for transformation to be realised. These are outlined below.

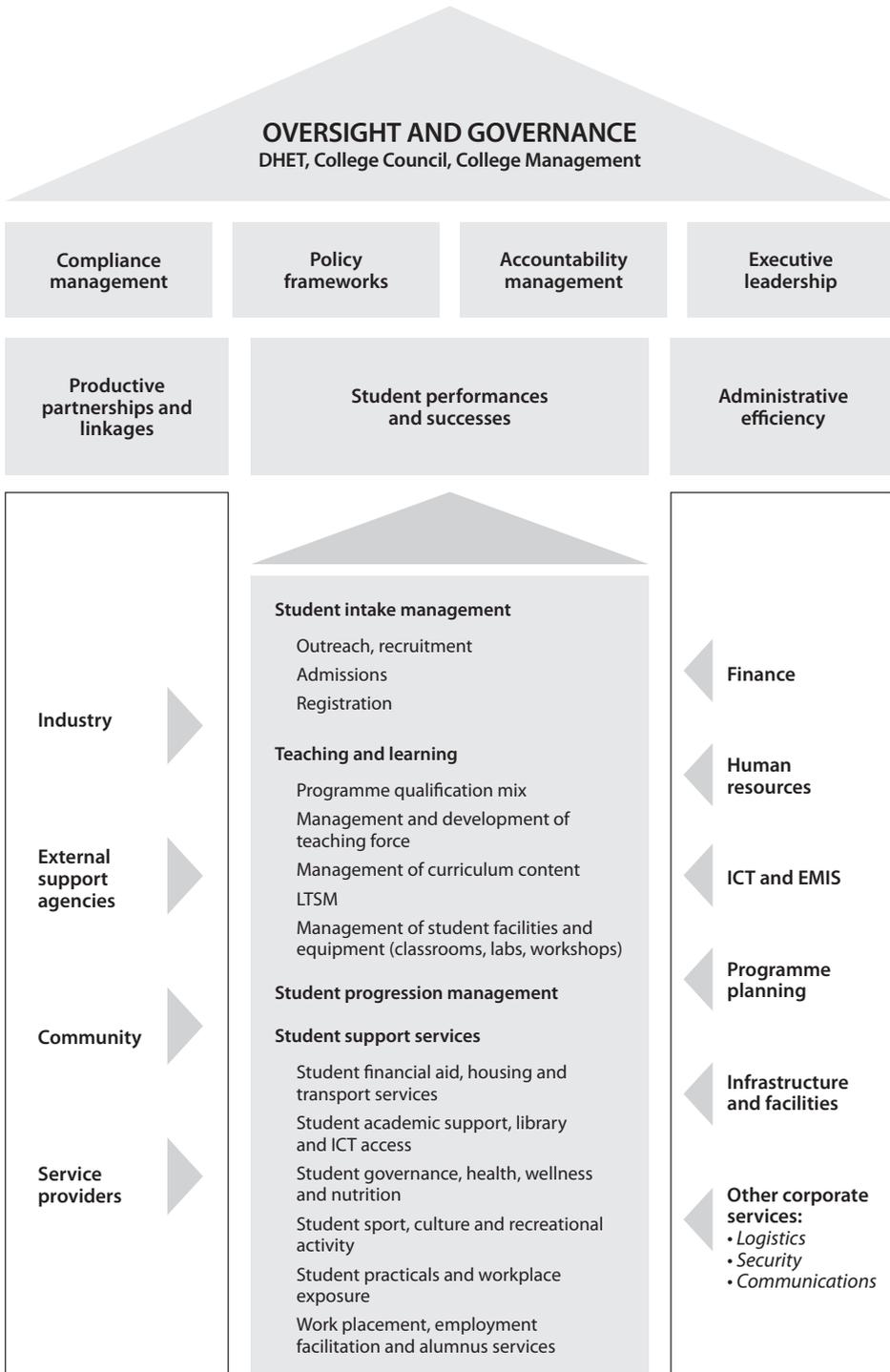
### **Settling outstanding issues**

To a greater or lesser extent, each college is plagued with a range of historical conditions which destabilise staff and compromise performance. Some of these conditions are interpersonal issues, and others are related to HR, finance and supply chain management, or stakeholder management. In some circumstances, the presence of these issues may be sufficiently disruptive so as to hinder or constrain any attempt at transformation. This was evident particularly in the Eastern Cape, where colleges were fraught with outstanding issues that were creating high levels of instability and restricted any meaningful attempts at college improvement.

In its first year of operation in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo, JET found that these unresolved issues significantly impeded any meaningful intervention to improve teaching and learning delivery. Similarly, the CIP got swept up in the daily crisis management that resulted from these unresolved issues and found itself being drawn into processes aimed at resolving the issues without having the necessary authority to do so. This situation was alleviated to some extent by the appointment in most of the Eastern Cape colleges of College Administrators who were provided with the relevant authority to tackle outstanding problems and lay the foundation for meaningful change. While placing colleges under administration was not a long-term solution, it demonstrated the importance of applying sufficient pressure to solve outstanding problems.

However, these issues can only be identified and addressed if a systematic diagnosis is conducted on a college by college basis, and the DHET adopts a plan to deal with these issues as a precondition for teaching and learning improvement. The plan must include a bold and proactive approach to utilising the appropriate authority of the state and its officials to directly tackle these outstanding issues as a matter of priority.

FIGURE 5 Integrated Framework for College Transformation



## Strategic alignment

While colleges are all required to undertake strategic planning on an annual basis to comply with public service regulations, this strategic planning is generally not undertaken in a comprehensive and inclusive manner, which undermines the extent to which plans reflect the full scope of the colleges' requirements.

One approach to building the planning function is to ensure that all components of the planning process are undertaken in an efficient and effective manner. Here it is essential to ensure that the responsibility for the leadership and coordination of the planning function is clearly allocated, that distributed responsibilities are assigned, and that critical linkages to budgeting, performance contracting and management, infrastructure planning, HR planning etc. are in place.

During its period of support to colleges' strategic and operational planning in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo, significant improvements were made by the CIP to the quality of plans through focusing on a grounded approach at campus level. Systematic analyses of subject areas identified which areas students were struggling most with and what factors were contributing to this. Plans were then developed to address these factors at a campus level, ultimately correlating the various campus-level interventions into a college-level improvement plan.

For this planning approach to be effective, active buy-in of all concerned and sound leadership to drive the approach were needed. Where strong leadership existed, staff participated actively in, and were committed to realising, the plans. In other instances, the plans were a compliance exercise, and the objectives were not likely to be achieved.

However, due to the particular planning approach that is adopted in colleges, the emphasis remains largely on factors that directly impact on budgets and student performance, and there is limited alignment of the HR, infrastructure, and other related areas. Therefore, there are parts of the colleges that have limited or no involvement in strategic planning, and the strategic objectives of the colleges do not impact on the performance of the individuals concerned. This limits the effectiveness of planning in supporting transformation. A more comprehensive approach to planning is a necessary condition for sustainable college change.

## Good governance

Foundations for good governance refer to the policies, agreements, systems, and facilities that are needed in order for a college to operate effectively. The role of the council, the prerogatives of the senior management team, and the obligations and roles of the various units and functions in relation to each other are included.

The appointment of new college councils in 2014, after a protracted vacuum in governance in many colleges, further emphasises the importance of instilling sound governance principles and practices throughout the colleges from the outset. These principles and practices should be embedded in effective governance policies and structures that are seen as legitimate, credible, and authoritative by all in the colleges.

## **Strengthening functional areas at the colleges**

Every college function requires basic resources in order to successfully accomplish its assigned responsibilities. These resources are referred to here as fundamentals for performance and include policies, processes, systems, and capacity. If these are not present, the function will not be able to operate at maximum proficiency. In building college functionality, therefore, it is critical that each of the core college functions be given the best opportunity to successfully deliver on its organisational mandate. This area of impact is most critical in building college functionality, and its concern is that all functions in the college operate at the highest levels of effectiveness and efficiency. The greatest risk to a college is its inability to meet the requisite standards for delivering the quality teaching and learning needed by students and industry.

In its initial conceptualisation of the CIP, JET sought to intervene in each of six functional college areas (Governance and Management, Human Resources, Finance, Planning and Education Management Information Systems, Teaching and Learning, and Student Support) to build policies, processes, systems and capacity.

While functions may be equipped with the necessary resources, the challenge is to ensure these resources are optimised for effective delivery. In the first instance, each function must, within itself, operate in a manner that conforms to standards and expectations. But this is not enough. Functions must also operate in synergy with other functions, if college functionality is to be optimal. This requires a high degree of streamlining, articulation, and integration of responsibilities so that the college functions as a cohesive and responsible unit. All other interventions are intended to ensure that the core functions of the college are properly grounded and are able to operate and generate the highest possible impact for the college.

## **Building a culture of performance**

A culture of performance is the commitment and passion to perform and the drive to attain excellence, not only in one's own function, but for the organisation as a whole. Passion resides in people, and therefore the functionality of colleges must depend on their staff and stakeholders. College functionality will rely not only on peoples' competence and their technical abilities, but on their passion to perform and the overall performance culture in the organisation which drives and feeds that passion. Strengthening an array of organisational functions will only add value if these functions are properly undertaken by people, and only if people are motivated by the culture of performance in the organisation. For this reason, building the culture of performance is considered the catalyst in college functionality.

## **Achieving measurable and sustainable gains**

Each of the conditions outlined above highlights the importance of a systemic and holistic approach to transformation which requires change across the institution as a whole. The complexities associated with such comprehensive change emphasise the fact that such change cannot be achieved very quickly.

In the relatively short period of three years that JET was given to turn colleges in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo around, the intervention was restricted by the level of complexity that underpinned each of the impact areas. While the temptation was to focus solely on impact area 5, there was a strong realisation from the outset that the intervention would be unable to address the functionality of the colleges by focusing on strengthening functions alone.

Ideally, transformation requires a developmental approach – assessing the particular status quo of each college and developing a pathway towards improvement that is particular to the needs of the particular college. The key issue that JET faced was that the developmental approach invariably conflicts with the instability and crisis management that defines the day-to-day operations of the system. Therefore, the challenge for college transformation is how to find a balance between maintaining operational stability and effective teaching and learning, while still implementing a transformational agenda. Considering the scope of change needed, combined with the pressures being placed on colleges to deliver to increasing numbers of youth, the implication is that the realisation of sustainable transformation cannot be achieved in a short period of time, and a more sustained intervention over a longer period of time is needed.

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