

South African Youth: Reducing vulnerability and supporting youth development

Goedgedacht
Forum June 2005

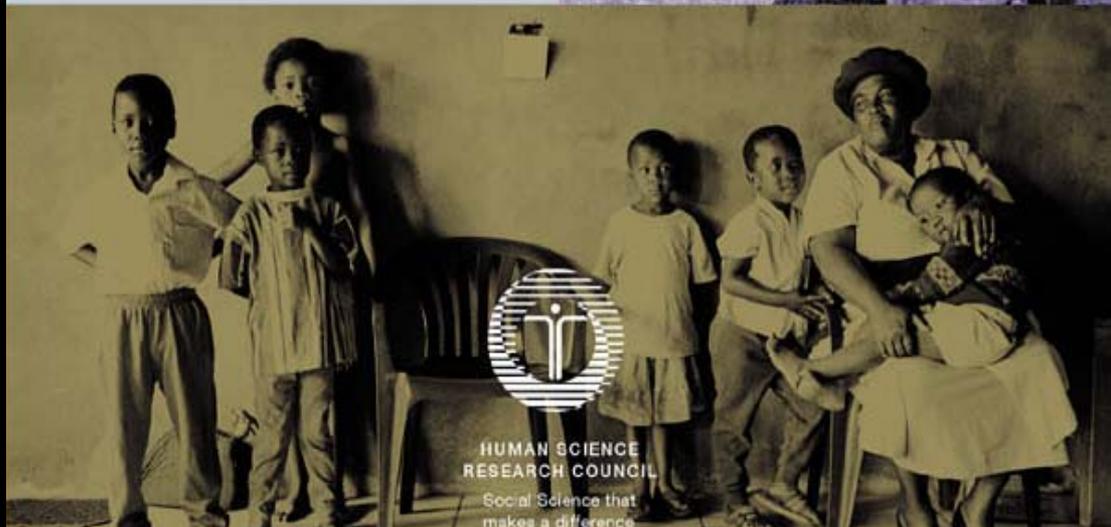
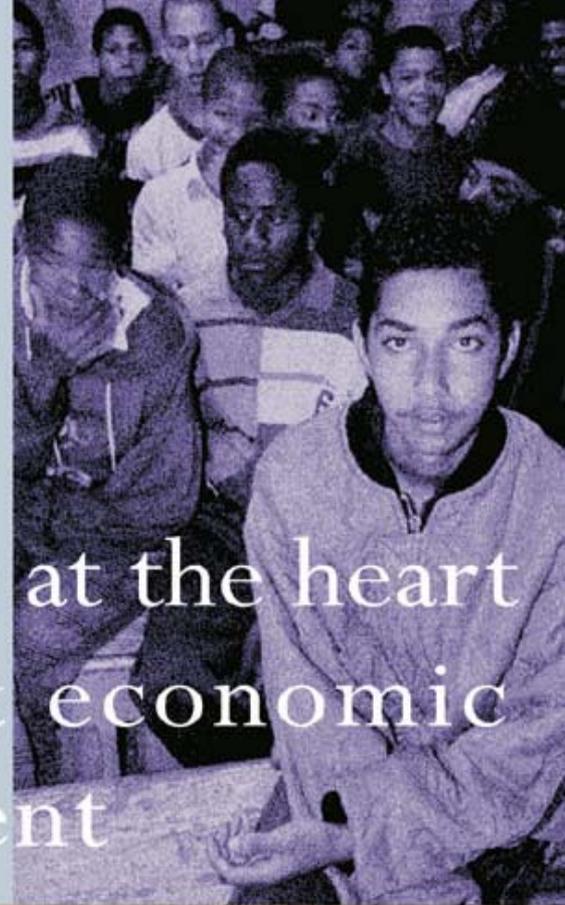
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Child, Youth & Family Development

AN HSRC NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME

The people at the heart
of social & economic
development



HUMAN SCIENCE
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OUTLINE

1. INTRODUCTION
2. A LITTLE HISTORY
3. THE SITUATION OF YOUTH
4. CONCLUSION



A LITTLE HISTORY

- *If it is true that a people's wealth is its children (and youth), then South Africa is bitterly, tragically poor. If it is true that a nation's future is its children, we have no future, and deserve none.....”*
- *(Percy Qoboza 1986)*







A LITTLE LATER IN TIME

- 1992: David Everatt and Sheila Sisulu produce a collection: *“Black Youth in Crisis: Facing the Future”* ;
- 1993: CASE & JEP *“Growing up Tough: a National Survey of South African Youth”*;
- 1994: The Cooperative Research Programme on South African Youth publish *“Youth in the New SA”*;
- 1995-98: *Inter-ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk*;
- 2000: CASE publishes a *survey of the situation of youth*;
- 2002 *Youth report* commissioned by the NYC.



Key concerns since the 1980s

- **Population structure**
- **Economic participation and poverty**
- **Education**
- **Violence**
- **Youth in trouble with the law**
- **And since the mid 1990s, HIV/AIDS and risk behaviour**



THE SITUATION OF YOUTH: POPULATION STRUCTURE 1996-2001

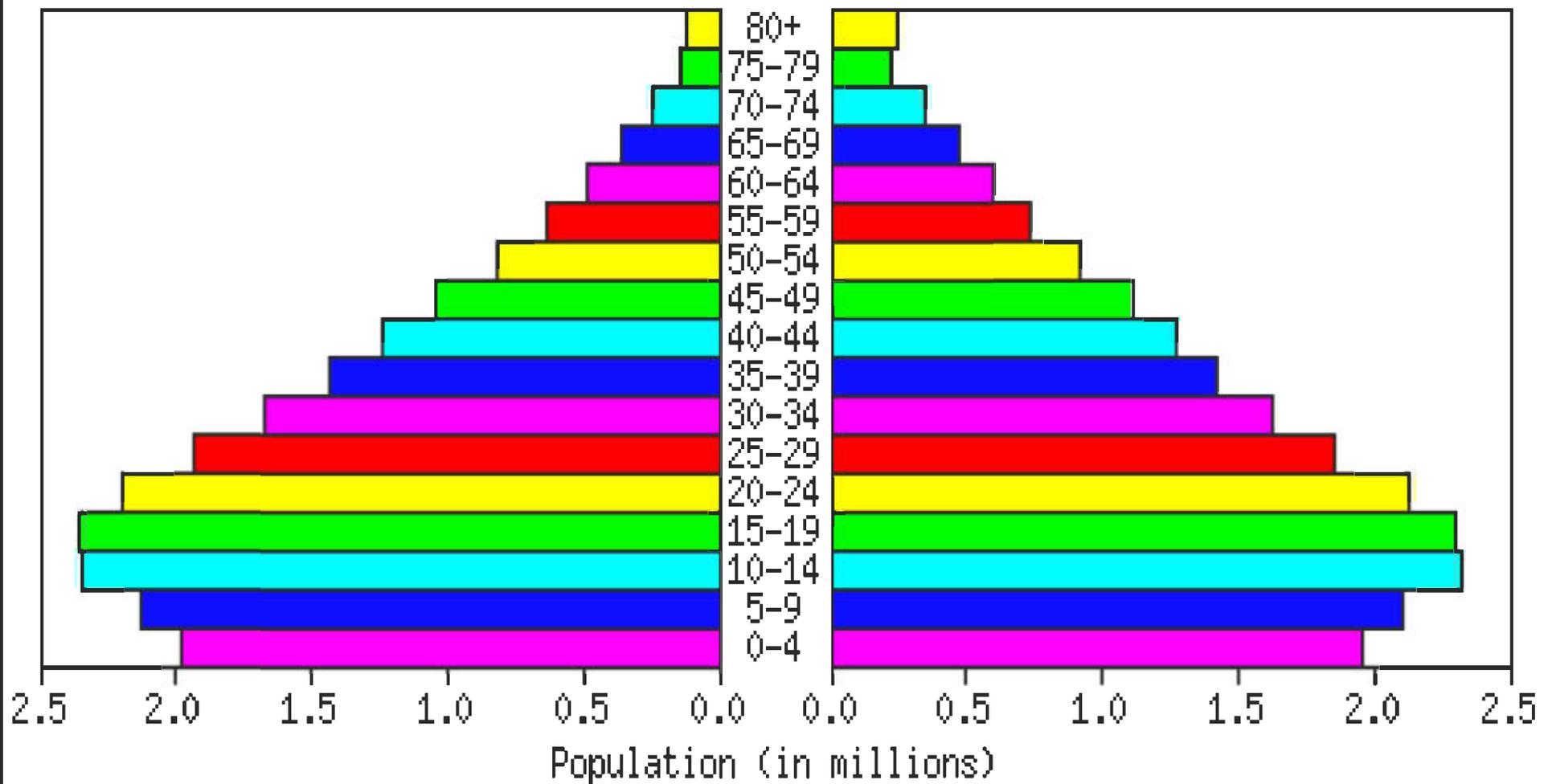
- The proportion of the population under 20 years of age is between 43 and 44% of the total.
- The proportion of the population defined as 'youth' is between 36% and 37%.
- Growth is evident in both the child and youth populations over the period, with the youth population growing by more than 12%.
- It is this figure that places particular demands on the job market.



South Africa: 2003

MALE

FEMALE



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base.



THE SITUATION OF YOUTH: ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION & POVERTY

- More than *two-thirds* of South Africans between the ages of 18 and 35 are unemployed (using the formal definition);
- Young rural people with little education and women are worst affected;
- Insecure employment, and low levels of self-employment, characterise the work experience of employed youth;
- Children, and youth from 18 to 24 years, are the most impoverished sectors of the population;
- Africans constitute the vast proportion of the unemployed youth (90% in the 25-34 age group).

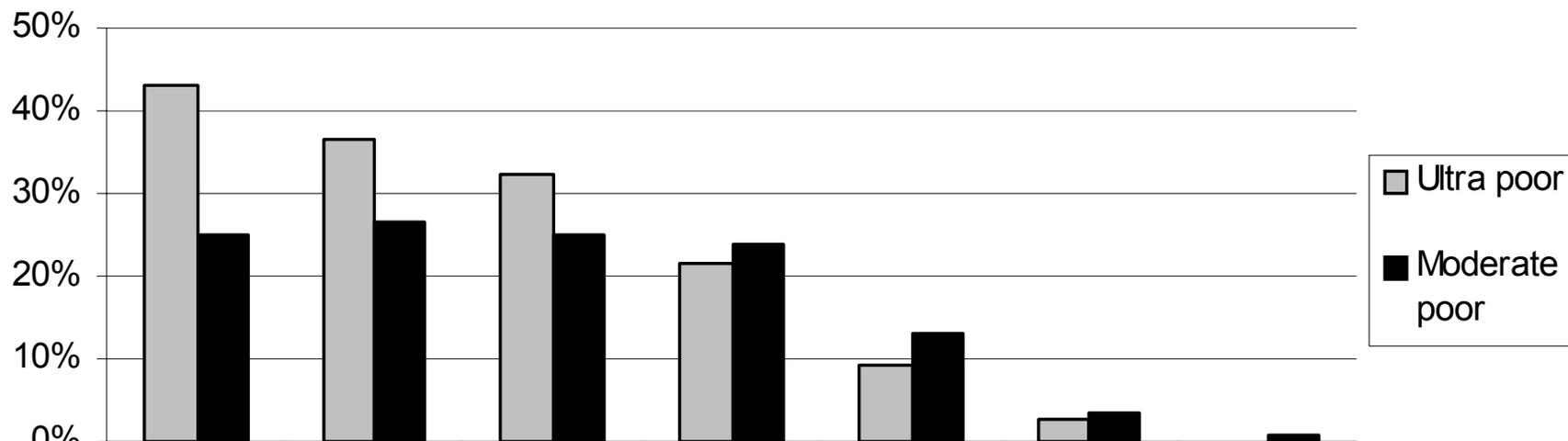


All gloom & doom? I think not



Youth poverty status by education, 2000

18-24



Ultra poor
 Moderate poor

	No schooling	Incomplete primary	complete primary	Incomplete secondary	Matric	Diploma	Degree
 Ultra poor	43%	37%	32%	21%	9%	3%	0%
 Moderate poor	25%	27%	25%	24%	13%	3%	1%



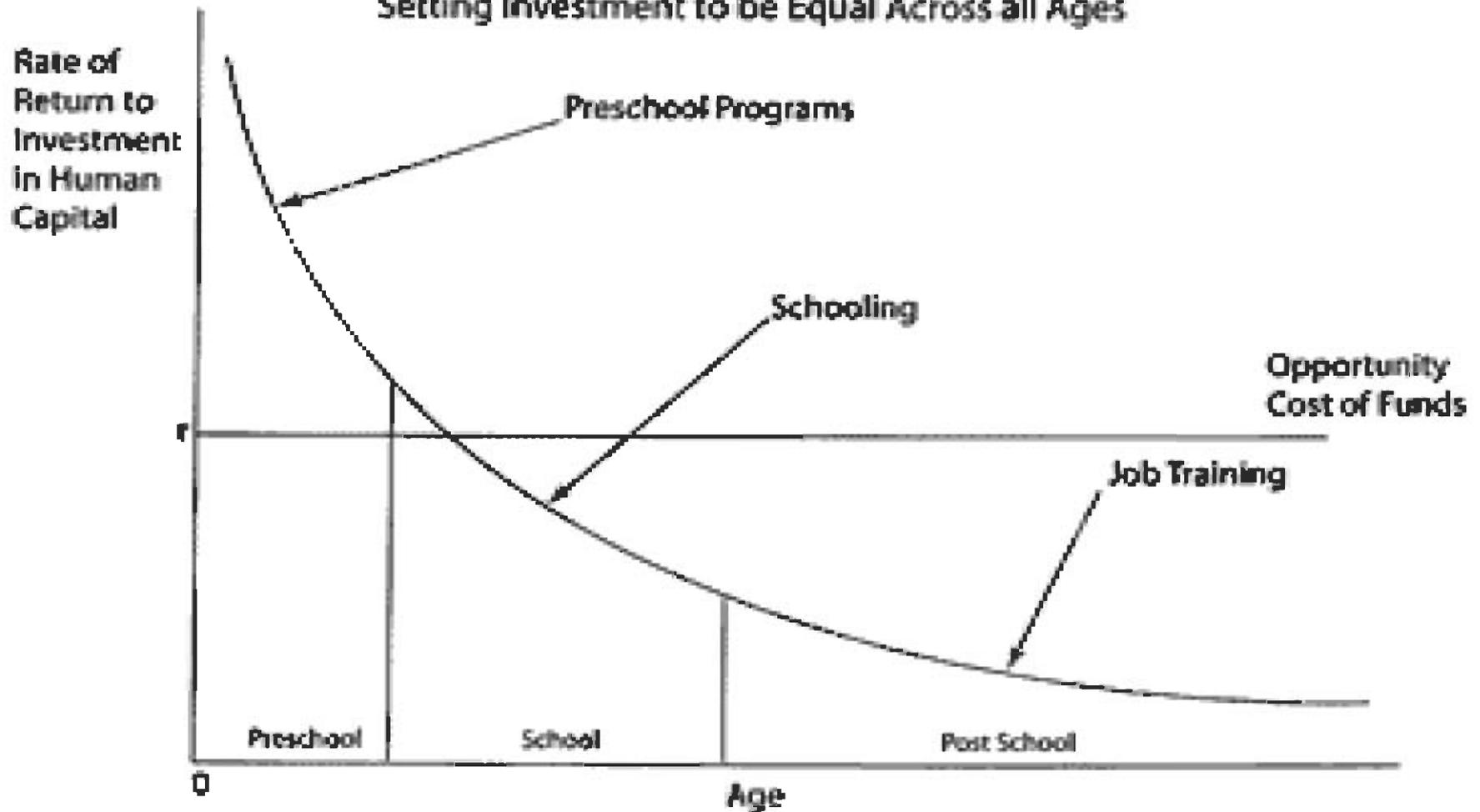
THE SITUATION OF YOUTH: EDUCATION & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Investments in young children are key to improving the chances of youth to secure a sound future - particularly for the poor child:

- promotion of good health and nutrition;
- reduction of the risk of neurological insults and antenatal threats such as FAS;
- support for carers through home visiting;
- early stimulation via home training and ECD facilities.



Figure 6-1
Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment Initially
Setting Investment to be Equal Across all Ages



Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment Initially Setting Investment to be Equal Across all Ages



Progresas / Oportunidades

- **Poverty alleviation and youth development through cash incentives & nutritional supplements and support for schooling for poor families who sign up to the programme.**
- **To receive support: take child to clinic, attend ANC's and family planning & parenting classes; ensure that their children attend school.**
- **Outcomes: poverty reduction; lower child mortality; better health; higher school enrolment, attendance & outcomes.**



Investing early is the key

- **It makes economic sense to invest for the long haul. It is also right to do so.**
- **The challenge is to convince politicians that a big investment today will bring returns many times over twenty years hence – long after they have moved off the political stage.**



ECD Provision

- **Only 1/6th of eligible children attend an ECD facility in 2000;**
- **Sixty percent of the sites are situated in urban areas;**
- **There are vast inequities in access (in terms of race, class and location).**
- **Lack of access to services, especially for the poorest and most at risk children under school going age is a major concern.**

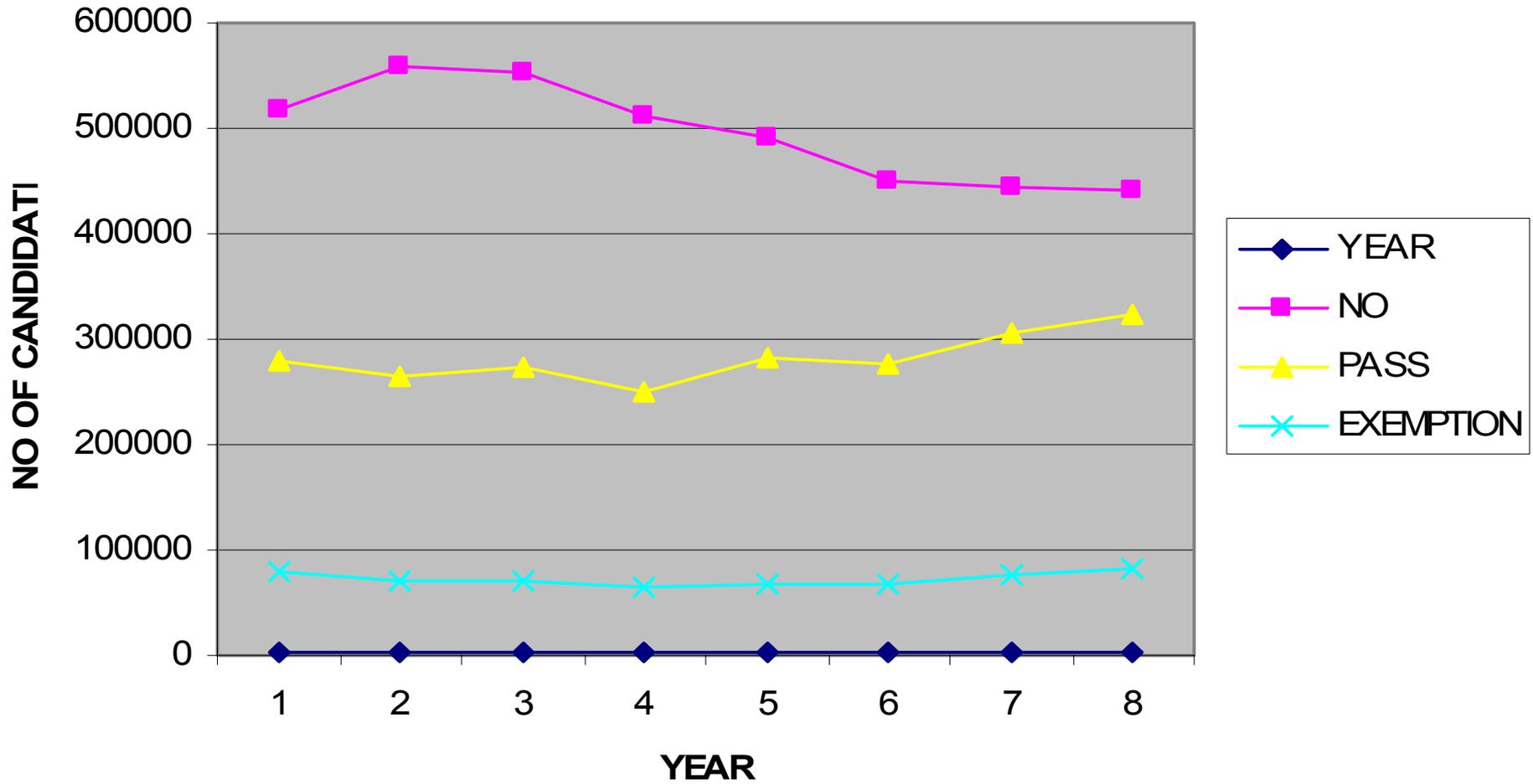


Schooling

- There has been a massive expansion in educational opportunity particularly for African people and women;
- Major problems relating to the quality and appropriateness of education, to repetitions and to dropping out of the system (nearly 50% of children who enter school do not complete);
- Education quality in the majority of schools remains poor;
- Due to repetitions and dropouts, the average number of years needed to reach Grade 12 is 60% higher than the minimum 12 years. This is a huge cost to the youth and to the state.



MATRIC PASS RATE 1996-2003



Level of education	African		Coloured		Indian		White	
	1995	2002	1995	2002	1995	2002	1995	2002
No education								
18-24 years	4	2	2	1	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1
25-35 years	8	5	4	4	1	0.4	0.2	-
Primary								
18-24 years	22	16	19	19	2	1	0.5	0.9
25-35 years	29	22	28	28	5	2	0.3	0.3
Incomplete secondary								
18-24 years	56	55	50	45	32	19	24	19
25-35 years	39	38	45	37	42	23	24	16
Matric								
18-24 years	16	24	26	31	57	69	59	61
25-35 years	17	25	17	23	40	54	44	44
Tertiary								
18-24 years	2	4	3	4	8	11	16	19
25-35 years	7	10	5	8	13	21	32	39



THE SITUATION OF YOUTH: VIOLENCE & YOUTH IN TROUBLE WITH THE LAW

- 36% of all non-natural deaths occurred in the 15 to 29 year old group ;
- 20% of people in relationships experience partner violence – a significant proportion of them are young and poor;
- 36% of the prison population is under 26;
- 53% those awaiting trial is under 26;
- 69% of those detained by the police are between 18 and 35 years of age.



The CIET Study 10-19 years

- You have to have sex with girl/boyfriend to show you love them: 28% agree.
- Sexual violence does not include unwanted touching: 51% agree.
- Forcing sex with someone you know is not sexual violence: 58% agree.
- Girls have no right to refuse sex with boyfriend: 30% agree
- Girls mean yes when they say no: 48% agree
- Girls enjoy rape: 26% agree (including 21% of girls)



THE SITUATION OF YOUTH: RISK BEHAVIOUR

- **27% of 24 – 35 yr olds smoke cigarettes.**
- **Smoking is highest among white women;**
- **White youth report considerably higher drug use than other groups.**



THE SITUATION OF YOUTH: HIV

- **Highest prevalence in youth...but:**
- **Young people from 18 to 24 years, in almost all population groups and both genders, are nearly 50% more likely to report having used a condom at first sex, and thereafter, than older youth.**
- **HIV-AIDS is a major threat in other ways – the loss of supports as caregivers and kin die leading children to become responsible before their time for the most challenging of roles**



Toward solutions: Supporting youth development: Economic participation & poverty

- A new Carnegie?
- Focus on *young* people and women;
- Education should be closely linked to preparation for the world of work;
- Assist the young to build social capital, especially amongst those to whom substantial economic and other networks tend to be unavailable



Toward solutions: Early Childhood Development and Education

- We need to invest in the very young;
- Content needs to be given to the idea of ‘strengthening families’;
- Young people need to be retained in education if they are prepared to succeed and secure what limited employment exists;
- Young people who have prematurely left the educational system should be incentivised and not just encouraged to take up other modes of education.



Toward solutions: Playing with words - Languages of instruction in Education

Are our school language policies a significant impediment to youth development?

**Can we learn a lesson from the building of
Volkskapital: An Afrikaans language of
science and technology**



Violence and youth in trouble with the law

- Involve young unemployed people in positive activity.
- Prevention of violent and antisocial behaviour is most effective if it start in *early childhood*; again the investment is well worth it;
- Keep young people out of jail. Over crowding of prisons is due in the main to large number of young offenders who cannot afford the bail set too high for minor offences;
- For imprisoned youth, rehabilitation and further training is essential.



HIV

- **Continue to search for effective behaviour change strategies;**
- **Address the attitudes and norms that support gender-based violence through school-level education and prevention programmes;**
- **Roll out the ARVs as rapidly as possible. Keep caregivers alive so as to reduce the probability of orphaning and all the consequences that follow;**
- **Don't put orphans in residential care. Support kin to look after them.**



Conclusion

We have made extraordinary progress in many areas in a relatively short period of time.

However, There remains a great deal to be done if the promise of our Constitution is to be realised in the everyday lives of the young - who still see so little change their immediate circumstances.

The barricades are back on the streets and it is the young who man them once more. This was surely not our vision for 2005?



Conclusion

The basic needs of the young are not secured.

While we have made huge progress in extending education and training we have a long way to go in providing a good education, training and work experience;

Too many of our communities are by no means safe;

Too many of the homes of our children and youth are not havens of support. They remain sources of damage rather than growth.



Conclusion

- In moving forward, we need to confront the fact that the vulnerabilities of youth are fundamentally a function of our failure to invest in and secure their futures.
- And we must focus on youth development rather than a problem-reduction orientation;
- Above all, the evidence says we must intervene early, using an approach that builds on the strengths, talents and enthusiasm of the young; that participates with them to find solutions, and that connects them to the supports, networks and knowledge they need for full inclusion in a rapidly globalising and transforming world.



Emerging youth: Engage them

They are the largest group in South Africa, and are:

- More materialistic
- Techno-literate
- Better Educated
- Better Connected

